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PRELIMINARY
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TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1983

The House met at 10:00 am.

MR. Speaker in the Chair.

MR.SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR.SPEAKER:

The hon. President of the Council.

SOME HON.MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR.MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I have a statement relating to government policy with respect to the very important subject of the 1984 Winter drilling operations.

Over the past several months, government, through the Petroleum Directorate, had been meeting with federal government officials and operators concerning Winter drilling operations on the Province's offshore. It was our desire to arrive at a joint position on this important matter. Substantial progress was made, and towards the end of November it became evident the major outstanding concern was the absence of an adequate presence of search and rescue in closest proximity to operations.

With a final meeting being scheduled for December 8th, I wrote and telexed the Honourable John Chretien on November 29th, requesting he prevail upon the Minister of National Defence to see that his officials came to that meeting prepared to assure the necessary search and rescue support.

No answer was received before that meeting on December 8th. The first response came in a hastily convened press conference by COGLA.

MR. MARSHALL:

This was called after it became apparent that we remained steadfast in our requirement for search and rescue. It must be apparent the response was made in that manner in an attempt to obscure this inexcusable deficiency and failure to provide search and rescue.

It needs to be noted that our officials openly provided GOGIA and industry with the Province's guidelines formulated last year and also, Mr. Speaker, revisions government were contemplating as a result of events that occurred last Winter. On the other hand, we only received

MR. MARSHALL:

the federal guidelines for the first time shortly before the press conference. The fact these guidelines incorporate in general terms the material and information we freely and gladly communicated to federal officials provides little solace in view of Ottawa's unilateral act which destroyed our aim and attempt to achieve a reasonable joint approach on this vital subject of off-shore safety.

It needs to be noted, Mr. Speaker, that eventually a reply was received from Mr. Chretien. It arrived after business hours on December 8th and after the - in the statement here it says 'telex' - after the press conference. The timing of the response after the press conference was obviously deliberate. Regrettably, it contained no information different from that stated at the press conference.

Now, Mr. Speaker, government has very carefully and deliberately weighed the situation. We have concluded without an adequate presence of search and rescue we cannot sanction Winter drilling being held this Winter. Our position is clearly stated in a detailed statement concerning the matter which, with detailed appendices gives necessary background data, I will be tabling this at the end of my statement, Mr. Speaker, and there are copies that will be available for members of the House, not, unfortunately, right now enough for all members, but there will be in the course of the day. But I would recommend that all members, indeed all members of the press, read this material very carefully.

Now, I will not, obviously, read the entire document, but I do wish to refer to and

MR. MARSHALL: read from page 13 of my statement onwards to the end of the statement itself, which gives the provincial position on Winter drilling and it reads as follows: The Province, as I said, has carefully weighed whether Winter drilling should take place at all. Even with every conceivable precaution being taken there will be risks involved. No Canadians are more aware of the risks involved in exploiting marine resources than Newfoundlanders. Fully recognizing this, we have concluded it is possible to conduct Winter drilling. However, no responsible body could surely endorse this activity if it was not confident that every possible and known measure, procedure or technique was being employed to ensure the lives and safety of workers to the greatest extent.

With the federal position on search and rescue proven inadequate from sober experience, who can honestly say everything possible is being done to fully protect lives? Since there is an obvious deficiency in the overall system required to ensure the requisite level of safety, the Province has a duty to withhold approval for Winter drilling until this deficiency is repaired.

We therefore put companies upon notice that from January 15, 1984, or such earlier period which ice and weather forecasts signal the beginning of Winter drilling conditions until

MR. MARSHALL: the end of the Winter drilling season, we shall issue an order to cease operations. In the event that adequate search and rescue is provided in the meantime, we would be prepared to reconsider our decision. If not, the order will remain in effect, since no rational regulatory agency could tolerate dangers to workers being aggravated by inadequate search and rescue. Given that there are risks attendant in offshore operations anyway, no responsible government, Mr. Speaker, could in all conscience agree with Winter drilling unless every safety measure known was employed to provide the fullest possible protection for human life.

In conclusion, it should be noted that government has taken this decision only after much thought and carefully weighing all implications. In particular, we have taken it knowing that it will result in a confrontation similar to that of last Winter unless common sense prevails in Ottawa and the federal government responds to its responsibility through the recitation of relevant facts contained in this document and in the statement in it. We have shown how we have sought at every turn, and, Mr. Speaker, we continue to seek to avoid another kind of a confrontation. However, our prime concern and responsibility is for the safety of offshore operations and thus we have acted and are acting accordingly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, first of all let me say that we have not had time to read the book just tabled in the House by the hon. gentleman, although the hon. gentleman did have the courtesy to send me the report half

MR. NEARY: an hour before the House met. I am sure that all hon. members will appreciate the fact that it is virtually impossible for us on this side have studied the document. I did have a chance to browse through it, so therefore, Mr. Speaker, my comments will be very brief and to the point, I hope.

We note with great concern that we now again for the second time have two sets of Winter drilling regulations and, Mr. Speaker, we feel this will lead to chaos among the operators.

MR. DINN: Who has the best ones?

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

It is tragic indeed that both levels of government could not put aside their differences long enough in the interest of protecting the lives of our workers offshore.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador's policy is clear on this matter of Winter drilling. And to illustrate that banning Winter drilling until safety can be assured has been the concern of our party for sometime past, let me read a resolution we presented to the National Liberal Party Conference in November 1982 which was passed unanimously.

'WHEREAS the Ocean Ranger disaster in February 1982 proved the inadequacy of safety and inspection procedures on offshore drilling rigs in the Winter season on the Continental Shelf of Eastern Canada; and

'WHEREAS a joint federal provincial commission has been created to enquire into circumstances of that disaster and make appropriate recommendations with respect to safety and other matters;

'THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that all drilling activity be suspended on Canada's Eastern Continental Shelf in the months of January, February and March until the said federal provincial commission of enquiry produces its recommendations on safety procedures on the offshore.'

As I said, Mr. Speaker, that resolution was passed unanimously by the National Liberal Policy Conference. If Mr. Chretien and others in the Parliament of Canada choose to ignore it, then in my opinion they do so at their own peril. Because this was passed unanimously at a National Liberal Party Conference and we had fully intended it would become a part of the policy of the National Liberal Party.

The thing that bothers me about the hon. gentleman's statement is once again we have two sets of

MR. NEARY: regulations. And what I want to ask the hon. gentleman is , Will we have a repeat of what happened last Winter? Will the provincial government be able to enforce their orders to halt drilling? This is the part that concerns me very much, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps the hon. gentleman might be able to indicate to us, either now or sometime in the foreseeable future in this House, what will happen, will we have a repeat of last Winter when the companies just thumbed their noses

MR. NEARY:

at the administration? The federal government ignored the stop order. Now what legal recourse do we have as a Province if the companies repeat their performance of last Winter, just thumb their noses at the hon. gentlemen and at the administration, and the Government of Canada ignore the policy of this administration? Apparently now both sides of the House agree that Winter drilling should be banned, but what recourse does the hon. gentleman have if the stop drilling order is ignored as it was last Winter?

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

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement today concerning the issuing of the December social assistance cheques as some misunderstandings have been created by the manner in which this matter has been dealt with in the media.

Long term social assistance recipients receive two cheques monthly - one on the 15th of the month and the other at the end of the month. The mid-month December social assistance cheque was therefore issued yesterday. The end of the month cheque for December will be dated December 28th, three days earlier than is normally the case, and will be mailed on December 22nd, before Christmas. This is being done to ensure that social assistance recipients will receive the second monthly cheque and have an opportunity to cash it and make their required purchases prior to the long New Year's holiday weekend.

Social assistance recipients must clearly understand that they cannot receive any further social assistance payments other than the cheque which was issued yesterday prior to Christmas. However, the second monthly cheque will be available to them earlier, as I have previously explained.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I felt it necessary to make this statement as my previous comments respecting the matter, addressed to the early mailing of the second monthly cheque, that is prior to Christmas, was somehow misinterpreted to mean that funds would actually be available to recipients prior to Christmas.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this is a very great disappointment indeed. The hon. gentleman has given the welfare recipients no concession at all. At least the Government of Canada send

MR. NEARY:

out the family allowances, the old age pensions, veterans allowances, they all get their cheques before Christmas. Now what the hon. gentleman is doing is sticking to his rigid schedule. He has adopted a cold and callous attitude towards welfare recipients. He does not trust the recipients. He does not think they can spend their money wisely.

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

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

The hon. Minister of Social Services on a point of order.

MR. HICKEY: I know he cannot read because he does not have the statement yet. I passed it along to my shadow over there. I do not believe he has seen it.

MR. HODDER: No, we did not get one over here. That is typical of you.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, to that point, I gave the page a copy of my statement while my colleague, the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall), was reading his, and she delivered it on Mr. Warren's desk.

MR. HODDER: She just delivered it now.

MR. HICKEY: She did not just deliver it now.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, the young lady is sitting right here and she delivered it, I watched her, while the President of the Council was making his Ministerial Statement.

MR. HODDER: On whose desk?

MR. HICKEY: The hon. gentleman got up before his breakfast this morning. He has not seen it.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), Mr. Speaker, as usual jumps the gun. He does not see the statement. He did not read it. And of course he does not listen to what ministers and members on this side of the House say anyway. My point is, Mr. Speaker, we have made concessions. We have made

MR. HICKEY: concessions over the last number of years. It is just not made on the Christmas holiday, it is made on the New Year's holiday, three days early, and in fact we work very hard to get the cheques in the mail December 22 in order to affect that change of making the cheques available three days early. The hon. gentleman, as usual, does not know what he is talking about.

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

MR. NEARY: It is not a point of order, Mr. Speaker, as Your Honour is aware.

MR. STEWART: The Speaker has to rule on that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Chair recognized the hon. Minister of Social Services on a point of order which appeared to be more a matter of clarification or at a difference of opinion between two hon. members.

MR. NEARY: So, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the concession is that the hon. gentleman is going to send out the cheques three days early. Because of the Christmas holidays and the New Year's holidays he would have had to have done that anyway, Mr. Speaker. There is indeed no concession and the hon. gentleman does not trust the welfare recipients, he does not think they can spend their money wisely, he does not think they can budget. He has adopted a cold and callous attitude, unlike the Liberal Government of Canada, Mr. Speaker, who send out their cheques before

MR. NEARY:

Christmas so that people at least can enjoy the holiday season, that they can at least enjoy the Christmas holidays. Old Scrooge over there elects not to do that.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan). Some time ago the minister advised the hon. House that he would be having negotiations with federal authorities, with the Unemployment Insurance Commission and with Revenue Canada concerning 123 fishermen in my district. Can the minister advise if there have been any conclusions from those meetings to date?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, on that matter, which is an important matter, involving 123 fishermen along the Labrador Coast, as a result of the debate in the House some time ago on a resolution put forward by the hon. gentleman who asked the question - and, of course, the government side supported the resolution, it was passed unanimously - we indeed arranged to have the officials of the Department of Fisheries, the Deputy Minister and others, sit down with the senior officials of the federal department responsible for the Unemployment Insurance Commission and Revenue Canada. As a result of these meetings, I am pleased to inform the House and the hon. gentleman that the meetings were very successful, successful to the point of getting a thorough analysis and breakdown of the situation,

MR.MORGAN:

Of the total 123 fishermen, 63 had paid back the overpayment on their unemployment insurance benefits to the Unemployment Insurance Commission through the means of a collection system; in other words, taking it off their benefits. A further eight of these are in the process of having their overpayments recovered or repaid, again through a payment system, and a further 52 are now appealing the decision of UIC, and rightly so. What we call a Tax Court in Revenue Canada will make a decision on that appeal sometime between now and the end of March, the

MR. MORGAN: end of the fiscal year. So what we intend to do, Mr. Speaker, is to reimburse those fishermen, reimburse the sixty-three fishermen who have already paid in amounts ranging from \$100 to as high as \$500 or \$600.

So we now are going to repay those fishermen. We are going to have the payment sent directly to these fishermen by the Department of Fisheries under the division responsible for the Labrador plants, which we own and operate. As for the other eight who are now in the process of paying, we are going to arrange with the Unemployment Insurance Commission either for us to pay the Commission directly what is owed by the fishermen, or for us to pay the fishermen and then they will pay the Unemployment Insurance Commission. And the further number that is under appeal, under the law apparently we have no choice but await the decision of the tax court and the appeal procedure. I would not want to jeopardize any decision because I am hoping they will win their case, in fact I am going to support their appeal case with the hon. gentleman opposite, but if we together lose that appeal the fishermen will not suffer. We will arrange to reimburse these fishermen as well.

MR. WARREN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, first I would like to say that I am pleased that the minister, after a year and a half of debate and resolution in this House has finally seen the light and has admitted that mistakes were made but not by the fishermen.

So my supplementary to the

MR. WARREN: Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) is: Is it possible that these sixty-three fishermen, who have paid back amounts ranging anywhere from \$74 up to \$1,323 will receive their cheques by the end of this month?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to say, first of all, in reference to the preamble to the supplementary question, that we recognized our responsibility a long time ago, but unfortunately we could not get the federal authorities to recognize theirs and we could not get them to be reasonable on this important matter. I think now, somewhat as a result of pressure from this Assembly and rightly so; if we are to influence people in authority that is the way to do it, through the House of Assembly, and that was done - we had influence on those people in authority with the federal government and that resulted in these recent successful meetings.

As for the payments, if at all possible, Mr. Speaker, those cheques will be in the hands of the fishermen before Christmas.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WARREN:

So at least sixty-three fishermen and their families in my district will be excited to know that they were unjustly treated some two years ago. I have a new question for the minister. In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the Atlantic Salmon Federation has made a request, or is contemplating making a request to have a ban on commercial salmon fishing in Atlantic Canada, would the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) advise this House if he has given it any consideration and if he will go along with the Atlantic Salmon Federation plan to ban the commercial salmon fishery?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for asking that question, because I do intend this morning, in about an hour from now, to address the Fishermen's Conference ongoing in St. John's here and that will be one topic that I will be mentioning and discussing, the commercial salmon fishery. It seems there is a very heavy lobby on the part of the sports sector of the Atlantic salmon fishery, and they consist of a group that now call themselves the Atlantic Salmon Federation. I checked out that group to see what they consisted of. Indeed, the total representation in the Atlantic Salmon Federation is sports fishermen. That group first of all advocated a curtailment of some aspects of the commercial salmon fishery, and now of course they are advocating a ban for five years.

The news that came out Wednesday from the Atlantic Salmon Advisory Board - whose chairman, by the way, is a Newfoundlander, in fact, he preceeded me in this position - was annoying, to say the least. I sent my assistant deputy minister to that Atlantic Salmon Board

MR. MORGAN: meeting in Halifax on Wednesday. The Atlantic Salmon Advisory Board consists of representatives from all different sectors, the fishermen's organizations, the commercial operators, the sports operators, everybody concerned. However, at that meeting the Atlantic Salmon Federation, which is part of the Atlantic Salmon Advisory Board, chose to break off from the meeting, call a press conference and take their own position, their own stand without waiting for the Board to make its decision and make its recommendation to the Federal Minister (Mr. De Bane).

Well, our position is quite clear; we are going to lean heavily on the side of the commercial fishery. We have 4,030 fishermen licenced to fish salmon out of a total of 15,000 full-time fishermen, and it is too important to these fishermen at this time to consider any further curtailment. We are not convinced, there is not sufficient evidence to show us that the problem with the Atlantic salmon stocks is because of the interception by these commercial fishermen in Newfoundland of salmon going into the rivers

MR. MORGAN: The Greenland fishery last year, we call it the International Water Fishery in Greenland -

MR. NEARY: Brief answers, Mr. Speaker. Brief answers.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, the gentleman who asked the question is concerned because the salmon fishery is very important to the hon. gentleman's riding in Labrador. It is very, very important. In fact, half of the income of the Labrador fishermen is derived from the salmon fishery.

MR. POWER: 'Neary' wants to ask all the questions.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, of course, if the Leader of the Opposition wants to ask the Premier a question of the ferry operations, I will sit down. If that is the case, I will sit down.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, the situation is that the Greenland salmon fishery is greater than our own fishery here in Newfoundland with 4,000 fishermen, and until we see some curtailment in the Greenland fishery, until we see measures taken by the federal government with regards to aquaculture and salmon farming, until we see measures to stop poaching on the rivers, etc., until we see these kind of programmes put in place we are not going to support, in any way or form, any curtailment or ban of the commercial salmon fishery.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Premier has been waiting now for two days for me to put a question to him and I am going to put a question to him now about a matter that involves ships. Did the hon. gentleman receive this morning from the Marystown Shipyard a telegram pointing out that the shipyard is at a crisis stage, that thirty-five men are due to be laid off in January, and, with no more new construction contracts in sight, more lay-off notices were given out today, which includes thirteen senior employees of that yard? And would the hon. gentleman indicate to the House his response to that urgent request from the secretary of the union in Marystown and what the administration intends to do about it?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, did you ever see the like? Did you ever see the like?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, here is the great Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), who for the last couple of days tried to discredit me personally by using words and phrases that somehow cast a shadow over the deals that were done on the Green Bay ferry -

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the hon. gentleman was listening or if he understands the rules of the House, but the question had to do with an emergency,

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MR. NEARY: a crisis, at the Marystown
Shipyard. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that Your Honour should
direct the hon. gentleman to answer the question.

MR. NEARY: If he does not want to answer the question, perhaps he can pass it off to the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor). The hon. gentleman has been itching over there for two days to talk about ships and here is his opportunity now to talk about building a couple of trawlers at Marystown Shipyard on speculation to save the jobs of the workers at Marystown.

PREMIER PECKFORD: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. the Premier to that point of order.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I am just trying to point out that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), once he starts an issue, how quickly he moves away from it when he finds that he is in trouble, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order raised by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, I would remind hon. members that answers to questions should be brief and precise to the question asked.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, we will get back to the ferry system before the morning is out. Before the morning is out, we will show what the Leader of the Opposition had to do with the ferry in Green Bay and what some of his colleagues did in 1971. We will get back to that.

Now, to answer the Leader of the Opposition's question so that I am relevant and following the rules of the House, Mr. Speaker, which I will do, and which I will respect, not only because I have to, but because I want to, the question of the Marystown Shipyard,

PREMIER PECKFORD: I am really glad that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) asked that question as well this morning. The Marystown Shipyard showed a profit last year for the first time since the Marystown Shipyard began.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: It was under this administration that it showed a profit for the first time!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, we have turned that shipyard around and made it into a viable enterprise-

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: - the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor) especially. We have, over the last year or two, provided ships on speculation to keep the labour force at a pretty high level down there. Last year we built quite a few ships on speculation and got them sold, and we are working very hard, the Minister of Development and other people and Mr. Whelan, the head of the shipyard, to continue to provide work for the Marystown Shipyard. So, you know, I have not seen the telex to which the hon. the Leader of the Opposition refers this morning but I can assure the Leader of the Opposition and all members of this House that we are going to do everything we can to ensure that the Marystown Shipyard remains a viable enterprise and is very much a part of our whole economic philosophy as it relates to the offshore with the development of Cow Head near Marystown to be a link with the shipyard which we hope to get underway next year. But I will refer to the Minister of Development for any more details that the Leader of the Opposition might want.

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MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Leader of the

Opposition.

MR. NEARY:

I can

MR. NEARY: understand why the hon. gentleman has not seen the telegram, he is under such pressure and such strain since the Auditor General's Report surfaced, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman evaded the question that I put to him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: The secretary of the union and the people in Marystown feel that the survival of the yard depends on new construction orders and what they are asking the hon. gentleman's administration to do is to build a couple of trawlers on speculation. Now would the hon. the Premier tell the House if it is the intention -

MR. TOBIN: That is what De Bane
(inaudible) Marystown.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am only quoting a telegram from the secretary of the union down there. Of course, the hon. gentleman, the only thing he is interested in is taking trips overseas compliments of the shipyard.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Another little bit of innuendo.

MR. NEARY: No, it is not a bit of innuendo,
it is a fact.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious the hon. the Leader of the Opposition has been smarting since Terra Nova and he has been testier than normal as a result of it. This is Question Period, the hon. gentleman is on a supplementary question, has a right to pose a question but not to make remarks.

MR. MARSHALL: He is making remarks, Mr. Speaker, that are geared to illicit responses, which he is getting, and which it would be normal to get from this side of the House. I think he should be called to order.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. the Leader of the Opposition to that point of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, of course, there are not two sets of rules in this House. Your Honour knows that I have been rudely interrupted by hon. gentlemen there opposite, Mr. Speaker, and if I strayed from the rules it was only because I was answering and replying to hon. gentlemen who rudely interrupted me. So the same rules apply to that side of the House as apply to this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. And when I am asking a question I have the right to ask my question in silence. And I believe that is the important matter. Your Honour will realize, observing what is happening in the House, that that is what happened, that I was interrupted by hon. gentlemen there opposite.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): To the point of order raised: The hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) was posing a question to the hon. the Premier. He said he was interrupted by other hon. members.

MR. NEARY: The rules (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: That is still no reason for him to respond to other hon. members. At the same time, I must say that there are a couple of hon. members to my left and to my right who seem to insist and persist in interrupting, and if that continues I will have no choice but to name them.

MR. NEARY: So, Mr. Speaker, my supplementary to the hon. the Premier is will the hon. gentleman's administration undertake to build a couple of trawlers on speculation as requested by the union in order, as he puts it, for the crisis to be overcome, the emergency to be overcome and for the shipyard to survive?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, in the Leader of the Opposition's preamble before the point of order he mentioned something about the Auditor General's Report.

We will deal with the Green Bay ferry service later on this morning, but I want the Leader of the Opposition to know and I want the press in this Province to know that the hon. gentleman opposite was a part of an administration that would not call the Public Accounts Committee together and would not have an Opposition member as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

MR. NEARY: Is that so?

PREMIER PECKFORD: This is the 'holier than thou' Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please! The Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we realize that the hon. gentleman is smarting under the report of the Auditor General, we understand that. But the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, should restrain himself; he is the head of the administration and the business of the Province must go on. So, Mr. Speaker, I put a question to the hon. gentleman, a supplementary question.

PREMIER PECKFORD: A preamble.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, because Your Honour told me the preamble was out of order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: I put a question to the hon. gentleman. Mr. Speaker, this is an emergency situation, there is a crisis in Marystown. The hon. gentleman is smarting under the Auditor General's Report. He should put that out of his mind temporarily and deal with the emergency, with the crisis in Marystown and tell us whether or not his administration is going to build two draggers on speculation.

PREMIER PECKFORD: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier to that point of order.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, there is no crisis in Marystown. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is trying to camouflage the whole question of his involvement, and the government that he was a part in, in how they started the Green Bay ferry service. Now he is trying to do it by covering it up and talking about a crisis in Marystown. The Leader of the Opposition will not get away with it because I will release the information this morning.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TULK: Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

A few moments ago the Chair indicated that if hon. members persist in interrupting we would have no choice but to name them. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition completely disregarded the Chair's call to order and I would ask him to observe the rules.

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, what about the Premier? He disregarded the rules of the House, too. What about him, Mr. Speaker? Does he get away scot-free, take the House on his back whenever he feels like it and get away with it?

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. gentleman cannot -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

PREMIER PECKFORD: You are hurting now. We got you on the run now.

MR. NEARY: You cannot play the referee (inaudible).

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

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. gentleman, when you are making a ruling, cannot get up on his feet, Mr. Speaker -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: - and say to Your Honour, 'What about the other side?'

MR. PECKFORD: We got you in the corner now.

MR. NEARY: We cannot play the referee.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: I mean, Your Honour has made a ruling and that is a direct innuendo to Your Honour questioning Your Honour's impartiality. Now, Mr. Speaker, we cannot have that without immediate withdrawal. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman is engineering himself, as he has from time to time, to get named by the Chair, to get dismissed so he can go and say he did not want the House to close or he wanted the House to continue on and all the rest of it, and go through his other little theatrical shenanigans that he goes through from time to time, but whether he does or does not, we do not care, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that Your Honour represents in this House the authority of the people of Newfoundland before the elected representatives of the people of Newfoundland. No member of this House, on that side or this side or any side, has the right to get up and make that kind of innuendo the the hon. gentleman has made. I submit, Your Honour, that the Leader of the Opposition should be required to withdraw

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MR. MARSHALL: the obvious innuendo that the
Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) was casting when he got
up and made those remarks to Your Honour.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!

The hon. member for Port au
Port.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the
point of privilege.

AN HON. MEMBER: A point of order. A point of
order.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, it was a point
of privilege, I am sorry. And it should not have been a
point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, because there is no point of
privilege here. Mr. Speaker, we all realize that the Speaker
is supreme in this House of Assembly.

MR. BAIRD: You are in the House too long,
boy.

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

MR. HODDER: But, Mr. Speaker, a question
was asked on Marystown Shipyard by the Leader of the
Opposition. The answer was not given by the Premier, who referred
to something that happened yesterday, questions that were
asked yesterday, and I have no doubt questions which will be
asked on Monday. But, Mr. Speaker, we on this side have as much
right to reply to provocative remarks by the Premier
as the Premier has to reply to provocative remarks
here.

And, Mr. Speaker, both yesterday
and today the whole rowdy atmosphere in the House
of Assembly was sparked by the Premier's provocative
remarks.

MR. NEARY: He is going off his head.

MR. HODDER: We will stand by the Speaker's ruling, but, Mr. Speaker, we cannot stand by the Speaker's ruling and allow the Premier to break it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker. Let me say, first of all, that when I raised the point of order, that was my right under the rules, Mr. Speaker. I asked Your Honour a question. I did not insult the Chair in any way, through innuendo or otherwise. But, Mr. Speaker, let me point out, and Hansard will bear me out, that the rowdyism that started in this House this morning and yesterday was started by the Premier arm waving and frothing at the mouth.

So, therefore, we resent it when one is singled out on this side and the other forty-five on that side, Mr. Speaker, get away scot-free. And if Your Honour will check Hansard, I believe Your Honour will report back to the House that my question was a sensible question. It was not an attack on the Chair. It was merely for clarification purposes. And, Mr. Speaker, I hope that Your Honour will accept it in the spirit in which it was asked. Because the same rules, I cannot help but repeating, that the same rules apply to that side of the House that apply to this side of the House.

And, Mr. Speaker, whether hon. gentlemen like it or not - I know they would like to bully the Chair. They have been bullying everybody else in this Province, they would like to bully the Chair - they take the House on their backs whenever they feel like it

MR. NEARY:

and then they ask for the protection of the Chair. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is a game of give and take and, if they do not like the heat, my suggestion to them is to get out of the kitchen.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I say, Mr. Speaker, that is not the point. Sure, there is heat on both sides of the House, there is no doubt about it, from time to time, but what we are concerned with is not the heat going back and forth on both sides of the House, which there is always going to be when there is debate on matters, but what I am concerned about, Mr. Speaker, is Your Honour's authority. And when any member of this House, whether he is a Cabinet minister or a government backbencher or a member on that side, gets up and questions Your Honour's ruling -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

- now that is the point, Mr. Speaker, and that is the distinction.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

Earlier this morning,

I indicated that there were some members to my left and to my right who seemed to insist on interrupting and yelling across the floor of the House and I requested them to adhere to the rules. And those rules apply to both sides of the House. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) certainly has the right to rise on a point of order and to ask a question, which he did. The point that the Chair rose on was the fact that the hon. the Premier was attempting to

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): answer a question, the Chair tried two or three times to call order and the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) continued to disregard the Chair's call for order. I think that is certainly not correct and I would ask the hon. the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw his aspersions on the Chair.

MR. NEARY: What were the aspersions, Mr. Speaker? Your Honour just said that it was in the form of a question. What were the aspersions, Mr. Speaker? I would like to know what I am withdrawing before I agree to withdraw it. What is it? What is it Your Honour wants me to withdraw? Because if I cast any aspersions on the Chair, I would like to know what the words are, and obviously I will withdraw them, but I would like to know what they were.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, when the Chair was trying to maintain order and to get the attention of the members, continued to interject and disregarded the call of the Chair, which I think is in violation of the rule that when the Speaker rises then every other member in this Legislature is supposed to remain silent. And the rule does apply to both sides of this House. I am asking the hon. the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the remarks with which he continued to interrupt the Chair when the Chair was trying to get order in this House.

MR. NEARY: If that is what Your Honour is concerned about, of course, I apologize to the Chair if Your Honour called me to order.

MR. NEARY:

and I did not observe the direction of the Chair. But, Mr. Speaker, on another point of order, I have to point out to the Chair that the hon. Premier was in his seat when the ruckus took place and the hon. Premier started shouting and howling and bawling, as he did yesterday, across the House. Now Your Honour should get Hansard and check it and perhaps Your Honour and I can get together privately and go over Hansard and see who starts the ruckus in this House. It was started by the hon. gentleman yesterday. Nobody is worried about his threats, Mr. Speaker, or his silly trickery and game playing, nobody is worried about that. But I am worried about the rules of this House, Mr. Speaker, applying to one side and not the other. That worried me very much -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. NEARY: - at least it would appear that way.

So I believe we should get Hansard.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you and I should get Hansard out and go over it and just see precisely what happened in the interest of maintaining a high level of decorum in this House.

PREMIER PECKFORD: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, the hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, now I do not know what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is up to on that point of order, but once again he is questioning the Chair and the authority of the Chair. It so happened at that point in time, when I was trying to speak and the Leader of the Opposition was interfering and interrupting, Your Honour requested silence so that I could give my answer. Now it was on that

PREMIER PECKFORD: incident that the whole matter arose. On a number of other occasions in this House, when the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) was speaking and the Speaker ordered silence of me and other people on this side, I went silent. Now that was the difference, Mr. Speaker. And now we find the Leader of the Opposition, on the one hand withdrawing anything he said, but then going on on another point of order -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: - and questioning the authority of the Chair and asking for a secret meeting. I mean, the Leader of the Opposition cannot withdraw and then get up on another point of order and start questioning the authority of the Chair again. There is no question that both sides are guilty from time to time, but on this particular incident the Speaker asked the Leader of the Opposition to be silent and the Leader of the Opposition would not be silent. On other incidents where the Speaker called for silence from me, I was silent, therefore there was no need for me to withdraw anything. So the Leader of the Opposition violated the rules of this House. He withdrew, and as soon as he

PREMIER PECKFORD:

withdrew he got up on another point of order questioning the authority of the Chair and having a secret meeting with the Speaker to see whether the rules of the House are being carried out properly or not. That is up to the Speaker. And that point of order is questioning the authority of the Chair.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. the Leader of the Opposition to that point of order.

MR. NEARY: Let me remind hon. gentlemen that it would not be the first time, and it will not be the last, when members of this House get together with the Speaker to talk over certain rulings that are made in the House, to talk over matters relating to the House. It is not the first time. I had occasion recently, if Your Honour will remember, to go to Your Honour about a ruling and we both came to a conclusion, and I would not want to embarrass the Chair by saying what it is, but we have that right. It is our privilege and it is our duty to go to the Speaker whenever we think there is something not going right in the House or we want to question something. That is our right and privilege. It is not a secret meeting, it is a matter of courtesy. These matters are held confidential because nobody wants to embarrass the Chair. That is why I am suggesting to Your Honour that we get Hansard and that Your Honour and I sit down in the office and go over the events of what happened today. And I believe the Hansard will show that the hon. gentleman had finished his question, was sitting in his seat, sniping and threatening the Opposition, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HODDER: That is right.

MR. NEARY: And that is what caused me to get up on my first point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please! The point of order originally raised by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is not a valid point of order as such. Certainly all members of this hon. House, if they need to consult with the Speaker for anything, that is their right and their privilege. If after examining the Hansard of today I feel there is a need to get together with the hon. Leader of the Opposition, or any other member for that matter, certainly the Chair will be prepared to do that.

Having said all that, the time for the Question Period is now over.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with section 18 of the Public Service Commission Act, I have the pleasure of tabling the annual report of the Commission for the period ending April 1, 1982 to March 31, 1983.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! The hon. the Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, Your Honour just finished ruling that the same rules apply to that side of the House that apply to this side. The hon. Premier is making threats across the floor of the House,

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, making veiled threats. Now, I ask Your Honour to enforce the rules as far as that side of the House is concerned.

PREMIER PECKFORD: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I did not make any threats across the House, I just said to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) that he was scared and afraid to ask a question on the ferry service this morning during Question Period, and that is true, Mr. Speaker, he is afraid.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Is that in order, Mr. Speaker?

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

To that point of order, as I have said a few times this morning, the members to my right and to my left do not have the right to interrupt an hon. member when he is speaking. The Chair was in the process of going down through the routine business of the day, called for reports being presented and was trying to recognize if any hon. minister had a report to present, and certainly did not hear, the hon. the Premier or anyone else, any specific remarks that were made.

o o o

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, before you go into Orders of the Day, yesterday -

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, is the hon. gentleman making a point of order or is he making a Ministerial Statement or -

MR. YOUNG: No, no.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognized the hon. the Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, yesterday while I was absent from the House, the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) raised a point of order that I made an unparliamentary remark about the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. I did say, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition was a crook, and he admitted it, but I withdraw the remark, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, that is not a withdrawal. Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman said that he said I was a crook and I admitted it. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is not a withdrawal. The hon. gentleman should be directed to withdraw, Mr. Speaker, and apologize to the House for his unparliamentary language.

MR. HICKEY: He apologized! What do you want?

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

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I said I would withdraw and apologize but, Mr. Speaker, Hansard reads: "Mr. Young: You were a crook then and you are a crook now. Mr. Neary: Yes, and the hon. gentleman used to come over to Bell Island scrounging."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YOUNG: I withdraw these remarks, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. NEARY:

What a crowd of clowns!

The Muppet Show!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please! Order, please!

Before we proceed, I would like to welcome to the galleries a group of thirty-five Grade XI students from Roncalli Central High School with their teachers, Mr. Tom Moore and Mr. Paul Stacey.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Before we proceed, yesterday afternoon the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) raised a point of order respecting the hon. President of the Council's (Mr. Marshall) distinction between House privileges and personal privileges. In order to set the record straight, I have examined the authorities and have determined that the matter relating to privilege is succinctly set forth in Beauchesne, paragraph 16, page 11, and it is further borne out in Erskine May, the 19th edition, pages 346 and 347. I think that one sentence in that section is worth reading: "The right of making complaint of a breach of privilege is open to any member of the House, and even if an individual member alone is affected, it is not confined to that member". It follows from the statements of these authorities that, when a member rises on a point of privilege, no other member may rise on any matter that claims to supersede that point of privilege. The Chair may only entertain one point of privilege at a time, only the Speaker may intervene in a member's presentation when he is of the opinion that he has heard sufficient to rule whether a prima facie case has been established.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

On motion, the following bills read a third time, ordered passed and their titles be as on the Order Paper:

"An Act To Amend The Liquor Control Act, 1973". (Bill No. 58).

"An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act", (Bill No. 55).

"An Act To Amend The Gasoline Tax Act, 1978 (No. 2)". (Bill No. 54).

"An Act To Amend The Income Tax Savings Plans Act". (Bill No. 61).

"An Act To Amend The Solemnization
Of Marriage Act". (Bill No. 78).

"An Act To Amend The Regulations
Of Mines Act". (Bill No. 17).

"An Act To Amend The Occupational
Health And Safety Act". (Bill No. 16).

"An Act To Amend The Labour
Relations Act, 1977". (Bill No. 15).

"An Act To Repeal Certain Obsolete
And Spent Statutes". (Bill No. 27).

"An Act To Amend The Newfoundland
Human Rights Code". (Bill No. 79).

"An Act Respecting Defamation".
(Bill No. 70).

"An Act To Amend The Newfoundland
And Labrador Housing Corporation Act". (Bill No. 4).

"An Act To Amend The Livestock
(Health) Act". (Bill No. 22).

A bill, "An Act To Amend
The Natural Products Marketing Act, 1973". (Bill No. 23).

* A bill, "An Act To Amend
The Newfoundland Public Service Commission Act, 1973". (Bill
No. 21).

A bill, "An Act To Amend
The Fishing Ships (Bounties) Act". (Bill No. 8).

A bill, "An Act To Amend
The Status Of Women Advisory Council Act". (Bill No. 20).

A bill, "An Act To Amend The
City Of Corner Brook Act". (Bill No. 19).

A bill, "An Act To Amend The
St. John's Assessment Act". (Bill No. 20).

A bill, "An Act To Amend
The Department Of Public Works And Services Act, 1973".
(Bill No. 32).

A bill, "An Act To Amend
The Municipal Grants Act". (Bill No. 52)

On motion, second reading,
a bill, "An Act To Amend Certain Acts Respecting Government
Departments To Provide The Power For Ministers To Enter Into
Agreements Subject To Specified Terms And Conditions". (Bill
No. 19).

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Well, Mr. Speaker, this bill
says it all in the title. There is no need for me to go into
it in any great detail. I think the hon. members of the
Opposition who had a chance to puruse this act will see what we are
trying to do is streamline and make government a bit more
efficient. And what we are saying is that on certain terms and
conditions the ministers may enter into an agreement, and that
is all it says, rather than have everything come to the Lieutenant-

PREMIER PECKFORD: Governor in Council or to Cabinet. What is proposed here is to introduce this piece of legislation amending a number of other acts dealing with the various departments of government so that ministers will be able to now enter into certain agreements subject to terms and conditions that would be laid down by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. So, Mr. Speaker, it is a pretty straightforward housekeeping bill which tries to streamline the operations of the government, I move second reading.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, no wonder the ministers get up and in a casual manner introduce second reading of bills and are very brief and do not give the House satisfactory explanations as to

MR. NEARY: why amendments and changes are being made. No wonder they do that when the Premier himself just did the same thing. This is breaking new ground, but the hon. gentleman bushes it off and says it is meant to make government more efficient and merely of a housekeeping nature. Well, we are for anything that will make that crowd over there more efficient but this is certainly not going to do it, Mr. Speaker, this bill we have before us here. Here we are a few days before Christmas, no word on the economy, no social assistance cheques, one of the few provinces in Canada with user-pay fees; nothing on Labrador and the task force, nothing about Bowater, chaos in the fisheries, and here we are forced to debate a bill that will give ministers more authority, within certain guidelines, than they have at the present time. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. Premier did not take the time to read the bill, perhaps he does not understand what it is all about. What he is doing is putting authority in the hands of people who could not run a bull's-eye shop, let alone run a department of government. At least when decisions entering into agreements and contracts were kept within the privacy of the Cabinet room on the eight floor, Mr. Speaker, you could rely on somebody around the table having a bit of common sense. You could rely on somebody saying to this minister or that minister or to the Premier, 'Look you cannot do this boy, you cannot make that political appointment, it is too blatant.' Or, 'You cannot enter into an agreement with this one because it is not right, he was not the lowest bidder.' At least, Mr. Speaker, collectively

MR. NEARY: the taxpayers do have a fighting chance that there may be one or two around the Cabinet table who could act as watchdogs over what the other ministers are doing. But what this bill is doing is taking authority away from the Cabinet and putting it in the hands of the minister within certain guidelines, the guidelines, no doubt, will be laid down by the Cabinet and say, 'Never again will these matters be brought before Cabinet. You, Mr. Minister, can make the decisions.' Now, Mr. Speaker, I fail to see how that, in the first place, is going to make government more efficient. All it will do is make government more-

MR. HODDER: Arrogant.

MR. NEARY: Well, arrogant, yes. It will do that if it is possible to make this government more arrogant. But it will give the ministers more leeway for political patronage and for political pork-barreling and for making political appointments. Now, Mr. Speaker, over the past few years in this House we have seen the administration there opposite chipping away at the authority of the House, taking this power and this authority away from the House, removing the estimates off the floor of the House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we are getting closer all the time to a full dictatorship. We have one-man rule now in the Province. And, Mr. Speaker, they are chipping away at the authority of the Cabinet and the House of Assembly and they are putting authority in the hands of a crowd who would not run a bull's-eye shop. I will not go up and down the ranks and name them, but it is so obvious to the people of this Province

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ah-3

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, how the -

MR. HOUSE:

Not many of them

(inaudible) .

MR. NEARY:

Especially the Minister
of Health (Mr. House), who mismanages, who is a complete
and utter incompetent

MR. HOUSE: But no scandals.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman does not do anything to get involved in any scandals. Only people who do anything get involved in scandals.

MR. DINN: You did something.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, at least I had the courage -

MR. HOUSE: You did not have the courage to resign.

MR. NEARY: I came into this House and I asked for a Royal Commission of Enquiry. I was the one who asked for that commission and that took more courage than we see today about people appointing Commission of Enquiries or having police investigations into things that are reported by the Auditor General. Mr. Speaker, the administration of that day, I believe has paid the price for its mistakes. It is long gone, it is ancient history. It is long gone, long departed like the Moores administration that this crowd over here will not acknowledge and they were senior ministers in the Moores administration, the most corrupt administration in our whole history.

Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned and we are very concerned about this bill, about changing the procedure and changing the authority. I know that things cannot stand still, I know that changes have to be made, but, Mr. Speaker, let us realize in this House what it is the hon. gentleman is doing. He is taking authority away from the Cabinet that has been there for hundreds of years. Now he may call entering into agreements and political appointments trivial matters; he may say, 'Well they use up a lot of time in the Cabinet,' and I say to that, so what as long as the taxpayers and the people are being protected? But under this system they will have no protection. Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, giving that authority to the likes of the Minister of Public Works

MR. NEARY: and Services (Mr. Young) or the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) or the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey), Mr. Speaker, just to take these three ministers? Can you imagine giving that authority to the likes of them? Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. gentlemen, the administration should reconsider this matter. I have said so often in this House that they are the ones who wrote the book when it comes to pork barrelling and political appointments and they do it with a straight face, they do it with their halo, they try to portray the halo over their head while they do it, and that is the amusing part of it. They think the people of this Province are swallowing that. Honesty and integrity! We found out all about honesty and integrity in the Auditor General's report and in the Ombudsman's report and all the other reports that have come before this House in the last couple or three years. Mr. Speaker, this is the most treacherous and dangerous piece of legislation to come before this House in a long time. As I indicated, collectively the taxpayers might have a fighting chance, that one or two ministers may say, 'Hold it, cool it there, Minister, you cannot do that; that is too political, it is too blatant. You are violating the Public Tendering Act.' But now ministers collectively will not know what is going on, the only one who will know what is going on is the Premier. One man rule. Full dictatorship, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the hon. gentleman to reconsider this move. I realize it takes a little time of Cabinet to deal with these matters but we are dealing with taxpayer money.

MR. HODDER: He would rather go to the Super Bowl.

MR. NEARY: Well, the Super Bowl is another

MR. NEARY: story. Baseball now is the latest not the Super Bowl.

MR. PECKFORD: I like hockey, then baseball, football -

MR. TULK: In other words you are a sports fan.

MR. NEARY: And the hon. gentleman likes rabbit hunting and fishing.

PREMIER PECKFORD: And I will be in hunting rabbits.

MR. NEARY: And the hon. gentleman will be hunting rabbits, that is right. I heard a man last night, I was watching him on television, down at the conference of

MR. NEARY: the small boat owners in this Province, who are also in a crisis situation. He said, 'The Premier did not turn up to our conference, obviously he is not interested. He is only interested in snaring rabbits. He is not interested in the problems of the small boats owners in this Province.'

MR. PECKFORD: Oh, of course not.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I did not say it. The hon. gentleman cannot say that I am the one who is saying it. It is Mr. Cashin and the people who attended that conference.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Terra Nova knows.

MR. BARRETT: Cashin did not say that.

MR. NEARY: Cashin said that he has not seen an administration elected in this Province in his lifetime that understands the fishery.

DR. COLLINS: When did his lifetime start?

MR. NEARY: Well, I do not know. The hon. gentleman perhaps is better equipped to comment on that than I am.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a very dangerous and treacherous piece of legislation. Now the hon. gentleman will get up after I take my seat and he will argue that, "Well, we have more important matters," he will say, "to deal with in Cabinet than talking about appointments and talking about contracts and this matter and that matter." Well, Mr. Speaker, we used to have a system when I was in Cabinet that you would have certain days set aside for the major items, Could we have a quorum call, Mr. Speaker? I would like to be heard.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Call in the members.

QUORUM CALL:

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please! Three minutes have passed. There is a quorum present.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not know who put this idea in the Premier's mind, I do not know who talked him into it, but I would suggest that the hon. gentleman reconsider, because, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has a great flaw in his own character in that he cannot negotiate, he cannot deal with people, he flies off the handle too quickly, he is too big for his breeches, too big for his boots. Everybody in the Province will tell you that the Premier is getting too big for his boots. He is cocky and arrogant, Mr. Speaker, and he would rather fight than eat. Most Newfoundlanders will tell you that, that he would rather fight than eat.

MR. ANDREWS: He would rather work.

MR. CALLAN: No, he does not fight.

MR. NEARY: Not work, he would rather fight than eat. And he is too big for his breeches, and he is too stuck up. Most people are saying the hon. gentleman is too stuck up, to put it bluntly, Mr. Speaker. With all his flaws, we feel sorry for the hon. gentleman that he cannot handle the job, he cannot

MR. NEARY:

cope with it. Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman sometimes, I believe, gets the feeling that we despise him or are jealous of him or we hate him. Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. Our position is that we feel sorry for the hon. gentleman, we pity him.

MR. TULK:

That is right. (Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

Talk about the legislation.

MR. NEARY:

Yes, that is what I am talking about. We are talking about competency and running the show.

MR. SIMMS:

Talk about the legislation.

MR. NEARY:

Well, that is what I am talking about. These are sweeping changes. And, Mr. Speaker, we pity the hon. gentleman, we feel sorry for him. He is unable to cope, the job is too big for him, he cannot handle it. And, Mr. Speaker, rather than my colleagues being jealous or envious or hating the hon. gentleman, we pity him, we feel sorry for him, as most Newfoundlanders do, because the hon. gentleman just cannot do the job.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is true about the Premier, as hard as he tries, then, Mr. Speaker, what about his ministers to whom he is delegating this authority? The hon. gentleman cannot cope himself, He gets more pity. People do not blame him. They say, 'We pity him, we feel sorry for him.'

MR. HODDER:

There is the noose coming for him.

MR. NEARY:

Oh-oh! Is there a hanging going on outside? Are they building the scaffold there, Mr. Speaker? I notice the rope is going down, the scaffold is being built. I would hate to see them take the hon. gentleman out and stand him on the scaffold with a hood over his head and weights on his feet. I would hate to see that happen to the hon. gentleman. But there

MR. NEARY: is a rope going down there,
Mr. Speaker. I wonder what is going on outside the window?

MR. SIMMS: Make your point now!

MR. NEARY: I hope I made my point.
I will repeat it again. Just in case the member for
Grand Falls did not get the point, let me make it again,
Mr. Speaker. Let it be recorded from this day forth,
from now on, that nobody on this side of the House, and
I do not believe very many people in Newfoundland, despise
or hate the Premier, they feel sorry for him because he
cannot do his job. Nobody is jealous of him, it is more
pity than anything else. We pity the hon. gentleman,
Mr. Speaker. We pity him and feel sorry for him, and most of
the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, I think, feel the same way
that we do. So I hope that nobody will get the impression
inside or outside of this House that there is any hatred
or animosity between the hon. gentleman and myself or the
hon. members of the Opposition and the hon. gentleman.
We look at him every day in this House with pity. And
sometimes he should see the look of pain on the faces of
his own crowd over there when he goes berserk and foams
at the mouth like he did yesterday. He is great at that,
arm waving and fighting! He would rather fight than eat,
howl and bawl and screech and yell, rather do that than
eat. But, Mr. Speaker, that is

MR. NEARY: not running the Province. It is play acting, that is all it is. Now if we feel sorry for the hon. gentleman in that regard, Mr. Speaker, how much more do we pity the poor old ministers whom he has under his care, under his wing, the group of ignorant incompetents that he has around him who would not run a bull's eye shop, the most of them? Mr. Speaker, would you, if you were Premier of this Province, delegate the kind of authority we are delegating in this bill to the present Minister of Health (Mr. House), a man who has practically ruined the delivery of health care in this Province? Would you delegate to him more authority to make decisions on his own? Would you, Mr. Speaker, if you had the opportunity if you were Premier?

MR. BAIRD: I would certainly take him over you.

MR. NEARY: Would you delegate authority to the hon. gentleman and he cannot even make up his mind on user pay fees, hospital fees, even though the Tory Party of Canada has now gotten aboard the bankwagon? If there was ever an example of an hon. gentleman who straddles the fence, who has one foot down there on that rail and another foot up there on the window sill, it is the hon. Minister of Health. But when it comes to towing the party line on political patronage and on political appointments, Mr. Speaker, they are all experts, including the Minister of Health. So here they are they are going to put more authority in the hands of that hon. gentleman so he can make more blunders and more mistakes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is only one example, let us come up the line. The Minister of Environment (Mr. Andrews) - now there is a dandy, Mr. Speaker, there is a dandy to give more authority to. That is a beaut, let him loose to make appointments and enter into agreements

MR. NEARY: with people without bringing the matters to Cabinet. Mr. Speaker, have we gone completely mad in this Province to turn that gentleman loose with that kind of authority? Have we lost our marbles all together? The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Andrews)! The Premier is saying to him, 'Look, go out and enter into agreements and make political appointments', he is saying to the Minister of the Environment. I mean, has the hon. gentleman gone completely cracked all together to delegate that kind of authority to such an ignorant incompetent?

MR. NEARY: Now, Mr. Speaker, what a source of embarrassment to the administration that hon. gentleman has turned out to be. Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman now can react all he wants. He can be as jumpy now and as jittery and he can chew on whatever he is chewing over there, unfortunately it is not sticky enough to keep his jaws together. Too bad it is not. The hon. gentleman has been a source of embarrassment to the administration. Now the Premier is going to delegate more authority to that hon. gentleman. Mr. Speaker, how silly can you get.

MR. SIMMS: A wise man!

MR. NEARY: A wise man! Instead of delegating authority to the hon. gentleman what he should do is give him the flick. It is time the Premier reshuffled the Cabinet anyway.

MR. TULK: He has done that.

MR. NEARY: No, he has not done that for a long time. He is afraid he might stir up a hornet's nest. If he just reshuffles them like an old deck of cards and does not bring in some of the backbenchers who are becoming disgruntled and disillusioned, who are ambitious and want to claw their way into the Cabinet, if he did not bring them in he would have palace revolt on his hands.

MR. TULK: Describe some of the people that are sitting there.

MR. NEARY: There are some good people sitting in the backbenches, by the way. For instance, Mr. Speaker, if I was the Premier I would go and buy a number twelve boot with an iron nose in it, a safety boot, and I would give the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Andrews) the royal order of the boot. Then I would invite the member for

MR. NEARY:

St. Mary's-The Capes (Mr.

Hearn) to come into the Cabinet. Now there is a little suggestion for the hon. gentleman. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook): I believe yesterday I told the House about my affection for the hon. minister, how truthful and honest the hon. minister is. And that is why, by the way, that we need these matters kept around the Cabinet table, so that at least the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook) could say to the likes of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Andrews) or the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young), 'Look, hold it. Hold it. I am in politics, I am in public life to do a job and I want to do it clean and honestly and intelligently.' And I would have to rely on ministers like the Minister of Municipal Affairs to keep some of the other ministers straightened out. So that is why, Mr. Speaker, I believe that these matters should be kept in the Cabinet room, that these decisions should be made collectively and not by individual ministers.

I mean, just let us come up the line again, move up the line a little bit to the right of the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask you in all frankness and all honesty, and I know Your Honour cannot answer me because if Your Honour could in all British fair play, Your Honour would have to say, 'Do not give that Minister of Public Works and Services any more authority.' He is out of his element now. He is out of his depth now.

MR. NEARY: He may be good with the embalming fluid but he certainly cannot run a department of government. He may be the last person in the world to let you down and he may be a little bit witty, Mr. Speaker, but can the hon. gentleman run a government department? Can he? I ask you in all fair play, do you think that hon. gentleman is capable of running a government department? And yet the Premier comes into the House with a bill to delegate more authority to the likes of him.

MR. WARREN: He must be going to change.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my suggestion regarding that hon. gentleman is that the Premier make further use of his number twelve steel-nose boot and call the Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young) into his office on the eight floor and line him up towards the elevator, make sure the doors are open, and then draw back, haul back and let go as hard as he can with a good swift kick from the number twelve safety boot.

MR. HODDER: And he should have the Coat of Arms of Newfoundland on the bottom of his boat.

MR. NEARY: And what he should have on the nose of the boot is the Newfoundland Coat of Arms, God Guard Thee Newfoundland on the nose of the boot, so as the Minister of Public Works and Services tumbles into the elevator you will be able to see on the bottom of his pants God Guard Thee Newfoundland.

MR. YOUNG: And you can kiss the part that says God Guard Thee Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, that is the proper thing to do with the hon. gentleman. And then my

MR. NEARY: suggestion to the Premier is to invite the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) into the Cabinet.

MR. WARREN: Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. NEARY: No, the member for Baie-Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) is being punished because he was a Liberal for so long. The Premier does not want to take him into the Cabinet, he is going to upset too many people. Because they will go and say, well, he was a Liberal and he came across the House, is that why you are rewarding him? But I would bring the member for Carbonear into the Cabinet.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is no harm to say that birds of a feather flock together, because now right next to the Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young) we have the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey), another beaut to give authority to. He will not even give the poor old welfare recipients their cheques for Christmas. Mr. Speaker, we have five ministers in the centre row there, five in a row, and I would say that the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook) is the rose between four thorns.

MR. ANDREWS: She certainly is a rose but we are no thorns.

MR. NEARY: The Minister of Social Services, as he stumbles towards the elevator, as the Premier up with his boot to send the Minister of Social Services packing, on his way with the Newfoundland Coat of Arms on the seat of his trousers, God Guard Thee Newfoundland -

MR. HODDER: And the Coat of Arms.

MR. NEARY: And the Coat of Arms on his trousers, as he is going down in the elevator

MR. NEARY: coming up in the private elevator over here in the corner will be a new minister to be sworn in in the person of the member for Conception Bay South (Mr. Butt). The hon. gentleman has been so close to it that he can taste it. He rebelled once but then the hon. gentleman backed down. He had it within his grasp but he backed away for a little insignificant parliamentary secretary's job.

MR. WARREN: He was so close.

MR. NEARY: That is right. He was so close he could taste it. So, Mr. Speaker, these are just a few suggestions. All the ministers are not in their places today. I think the Minister of Forest, Resources and Lands (Mr. Power) is not a bad fellow, not a bad fellow.

MR. HODDER: He is not excellent.

MR. NEARY: In many ways the hon. gentleman has been a disappointment to us.

MR. NEARY: But the hon. gentleman is not a bad fellow and I believe that if ministers came into the Cabinet with things that he thought were improper, if they were improper and he could detect improper spending of public money, mismanagement and extravagance and waste, that he might just raise his voice in protest. And that is why these matters have to be kept around the table, Mr. Speaker, and not farmed out to the individual ministers.

MR. WARREN: What about the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. NEARY: The Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan), well, he was not in his seat and that is why I forgot him. Out of sight out of mind. We never know who the Minister of Fisheries is until we see him.

MR. HODDER: He is easy to forget.

MR. NEARY: He is easy to forget. If he ever goes back yodelling and singing again as Chubby Charlie, the first song he should sing is 'Am I That Easy To Forget'. Mr. Speaker, so that hon. gentleman, of course, not only because of this bill that we are debating here, giving more authority to the ministers, not only on the grounds that the hon. gentleman is unable to handle such authority, but that hon. gentleman should have gotten the royal order of the boot a long time ago. We have asked the question many times in this House, why is the Premier protecting the Minister of Fisheries? We know about the special Ombudsman Report, we know about the racist jokes - what else do we know? - we know how he interfered with the operations of the court. Any one of these three and there are others - there are five examples - but any one of these three would have been enough in any other jurisdiction to bring about a minister's resignation.

MR. WARREN: In fact I think the member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) should be in the Cabinet.

MR. NEARY: No, no, no, my God, no. No, a thousand times no. From my dealings with Your Honour, and I do not want to embarrass the Chair, but I believe Your Honour would certainly make a better minister than the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan).

MR. WARREN: Hear, hear.

MR. NEARY: And, of course, Mr. Speaker, the gross, the greatest ignorant incompetent of all the incompetents, who puts up a gigantic bluff, a good front, but all you have to do is follow the thinking, just follow the logic or illogic, I am thinking about the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn). You talk about arrogance -

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

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please!

A point of order the hon.

Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. DINN: There is nothing in this bill relating to the Department of Labour and Manpower and I would ask the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), if he could, to be a little more relevant.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

To that point of order, the hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower is correct, that there is not any reference to his department in this bill. I would remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition of our rule of relevancy.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was about to point out to the House that that is the reason they left the hon. gentleman off the list, because he is such a gross incompetent. And, of course, there is no question about it that there are other hon. gentlemen there opposite. What about the member for the Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow]? The member for the Bay of Islands has been looking at the Premier now

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MR. NEARY: with calf's eyes for the last
three or four years, drooling, sacrificing his principles to
toe the party line,

MR. NEARY: bowing and scraping and crawling, Mr. Speaker, trying to get into the Cabinet.

DR. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, it is not in order for a member of this House to ridicule or to seem to ridicule any other member of this House in the performance of his duties as an MHA, and I would ask you to remind the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) of that fact.

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

MR. HODDER: No, Mr. Speaker, the debate is quite in order. There is nothing in the Standing Orders or in Beauchesne which says the hon. House Leader cannot criticize a member of the Cabinet in any which way he wants, as long as he uses parliamentary language, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, I would once again remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition of our rule of relevancy, and there is not a valid point of order.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the interest of the taxpayers and the voters of this Province being reassured that decisions are being made around the Cabinet table in a competent and efficient manner without prejudice, without partisan politics, I would certainly recommend that the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) be top on the list of priorities when it comes to a Cabinet reshuffle. As I said, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has been bowing and scraping for the last couple of years, leaving the House heartsick, heartbroken over the fact that he has been by-passed so often, and they dropped him as a parliamentary secretary. He used to be a parliamentary secretary in Corner Brook

MR. NEARY: to the former premier. They even kicked him out of that, Mr. Speaker. But that hon. gentleman, of all the ones that I have named as potential ministers, I think the hon. member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) should head the list. He is my number one choice. He is my favourite.

MR. TULK: Who is this?

MR. NEARY: The member for the Bay of Islands.

MR. TULK: A gentleman.

MR. NEARY: A gentleman and a scholar, and he is my favourite. I would put him on the top of the list when the Premier does his Cabinet reshuffle which, we understand, is going to be sometime in the New Year, if he can get up the courage to do it before the next session of the House.

MR. TULK: He is going to shuffle the Cabinet?

MR. NEARY: He is going to shuffle the Cabinet, so we are told, in 1984. That will be the New Year's present to the people of this Province, a Cabinet reshuffle. And so we look forward Mr. Speaker, to hearing the name of the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) read off the top of the list. The Premier will come out and say, "This morning I went down to His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor, accompanied by the member for the Bay of Islands, and I had him sworn in the Cabinet as Minister of Finance."

MR. TULK: Who? The member for the Bay of Islands?

MR. NEARY: The member for Bay of Islands as Minister of Finance. Because any man who can move a whole community without

MR. NEARY: permission, and buy bulldozers and trucks to do it and then send the bill in to the government and get it paid, deserves to be Minister of Finance in this Province.

I remember sitting at the Cabinet table struggling with a bill from the hon. gentleman the time they moved the population off Woods Island, no permission, no authority, no approval, nothing - move them and send the bill to the government! Now, a man who can do that, Mr. Speaker, is high on my list of people to be admitted to the Cabinet.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. McNicholas): On a point of order, the hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: On a number of occasions in the hon. gentleman's speech, and now he is doing it again for an hon. member here - I refer him to Beauchesne, page 103 and page 104. The hon. gentleman is completely out of order in imputing motives, bad motives or motives different from those acknowledged to a member on pages 103 and 104, paragraph 319, section (3): "to impute to any member or members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case". Obviously the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is doing that now and I would ask the hon. the Leader of the Opposition to adhere to the rules of the House. I do not think the comments that he is now making are at all becoming of an hon. member of this House, and it is clear in Beauchesne, page 103, paragraph 316 and page 104 paragraph 319 that these statements that he is now making are violating those rules set down in Beauchesne.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. McNicholas): To that point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, obviously is still on his 'downer' since the Auditor General's report was tabled in this House. The fact of the matter is, what I was doing, Mr. Speaker, was praising the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow). I was not attributing any motives. I noticed the hon. gentleman was rather drowsy over there, was falling asleep. Perhaps the hon. gentleman, now that he has awakened, will listen to what I am saying. I am praising the hon. the member for Bay of Islands and asking the Premier to invite him into his Cabinet, Mr. Speaker, not attributing motives to anything the hon. gentleman does or says.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Just one more point on that. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition is really not fair and it should not be allowed to go unchallenged. The Leader of the Opposition has made certain statements about the member for Bay of Islands for actions that he took in moving a community and then having the bill come in. The Leader of the Opposition has made a number of statements which impute motives to the hon. the member for Bay of Islands. There is no question about that, and Hansard will show it, and I think, Mr. Speaker, that action has to be taken to see that the Leader of the Opposition refrains from doing this. You know, it is not fair.

MR. NEARY: Sit down, boy, and learn the rules. Learn the rules, boy.

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

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, the hon. the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder).

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, the Premier should have his House Leader (Mr. Marshall) come back in again and advise him on Beauchesne. Obviously, neither he nor the House Leader were right yesterday about their spurious point of privilege, and, Mr. Speaker, neither one of those sections, particularly page 104, section 320 or section 319, deals with unparliamentary language. Mr. Speaker, in actual fact, any member can stand up in this House and praise another member for actions which they took, which is all that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) was doing, and I see nothing for the Premier to mumble about.

MR. HODDER: On many occasions I have heard members on both sides of the House either take members to task for things they have done or praise them for things they have done. I think in this case the very fact the member for - whatever the district is down there? -

MR. NEARY: Bay of Islands.

MR. HODDER: - Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) had been re-elected shows that many of the people of Woods Island are very grateful for what he did. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) certainly knows that and compliments him, because these are some of the member for the Bay of Islands' strongest supporters. I am very familiar myself with that particular episode, and I see no aspersions, allusions or anything else being pointed at the member.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, just one final comment. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition made comments about moving people from one place to another -

MR. NEARY: Yes, and praised him for it.

PREMIER PECKFORD: No, the Leader of the Opposition did not.

- and in a very backhanded way was saying - and look, it is on page 104, paragraph 319, it is quite clear, 'or to impute to any member or members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case'. And the Leader of the Opposition did that in this case

MR. NEARY: Sit down, boy. We know the Auditor General's report is tabled in the House.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): To that point of order, the hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, if there were

MR. HODDER: unworthy motives imputed then they must be in the mind of the Premier, they certainly were not in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary).

MR. MARSHALL: It was quite clear. It is in the record.

MR. NEARY: Sure.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): Order, please!

There appears to be two points of order here. The first is the one raised by the hon. the Premier which dealt with the second reading and relevancy and I would remind the Leader of the Opposition that he should confine his remarks to that bill. As to the second point, I think it is a difference of opinion between two hon. members.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we know that the hon. gentleman is testy and he is on a downer because of what the Auditor General said about his administration, we understand that. But, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman should not take it out on others, he should look in the mirror and say to himself, 'I have done something wrong, my administration has done something wrong and improper and we have squandered and wasted \$1.6 million. We cannot blame it on Mr. Smallwood, we cannot blame it on Mr. Moores, we did it and we are the ones who are going to have to live with it and face the music.' Now, that is what the hon. gentleman should be doing instead of sulking and trying to take it out on others.

PREMIER PECKFORD: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order, the hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) has been on his feet now for the last thirty or forty seconds and he has been saying nothing about the bill that is before the House, he has been completely irrelevant. Every single syllable that the Leader of the Opposition has just uttered is completely irrelevant to this bill and he has been allowed to do this, Mr. Speaker, and that is against the rules of the House and the Leader of the Opposition knows that.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: You know, Mr. Speaker, that is a valid point of order. Because for the thirty or forty seconds I did not say anything about the bill and that is a valid point of order.

MR. NEARY: Now I hope Your Honour will rule that it is a valid point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): To that point of order, I did remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) just a few minutes ago that he should confine his remarks to the bill we are discussing.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my recommendation, rather than give more authority to ministers, is that the member for the Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) be appointed Minister of Finance and that the number twelve boot that I recommended to the hon. gentleman be put on again, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) be called into the Cabinet room, this time right across the nose of the boot deficit financing, mismanagement, incompetence, deficit, 12 per cent sales tax, right on the nose, and then give him the boot right into the private elevator, whether it is there or not - put the elevator down on the ground floor and open the doors and let him go before he ruins the Province. He has brought us now to the brink of financial ruin in this Province through his incompetence and his arrogance and stupidity, Mr. Speaker, the likes of which we have never seen in our whole history. If the Minister of Finance in any other jurisdiction did what the Minister of Finance did in this Province, out the door! Here they brazen it out. It is a new technique now, brazen it out. Ruin the Province, wreck the economy and bring the Province to the brink of bankruptcy and that is the new technique, brazen it out! The voters will forget, the teachers will not remember, so ride out the storm. Close the windows when the storm is raging outside, close the windows and let her rage; keep your head down so you will not get hit with the criticism of the people, keep your head down, close the windows and let the storm rage on and it will blow over and it will all be

MR. NEARY: forgotten when the next election is called, nobody will think about the poor old teachers who have been ridiculed by this administration. Mr. Speaker, they will remember, there is no doubt about that, they will remember.

Mr. Speaker, so my recommendation to the hon. gentleman, rather than start delegating more authority to the likes of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) who is in the top three, I would say, of the most incompetent - I hate to be using that term ignorant incompetent but it is the only way I can describe the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker.

DR. COLLINS: It is unparliamentary.

MR. NEARY: And it is parliamentary.

DR. COLLINS: No, it is not.

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes, it is. He does not know the difference. The unfortunate and tragic part of it is -

DR. COLLINS: A point of order Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): A point of order the hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: In our Standing Orders, as a matter of fact, there is a clause in there which actually should prevent the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) from rising to his feet and making those remarks. In Standing Order 52 in part it says: "Nor use offensive language against any member of this House". Now, some of the words that the hon. Leader of the Opposition has used towards various ministers in government, and they are members of this House, have been offensive in the extreme. We have been, up to now, really too polite to make much of an issue about it, and in actual fact, we have not made an issue about it

DR. COLLINS: because most things that the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) says, is as water off a duck's back, no one pays any attention anyway. But after you go to a certain extreme, just so they do not become a precedent in the House one has to make some sort of a gentle objection to them. And, as I say, it is clearly written in our Standing Orders, you do not have to go to Beauchesne, it is clearly in our Standing Orders the point I made, part of Section (52).

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

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): To that point of order, the hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, in our Standing Orders there is a reference to offensive language, but offensive language is not defined, so we have to go to Beauchesne for what is offensive and what is not offensive. In Beauchesne, page 105, there is nothing that refers to any of the words that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) was using.

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the term ignorant incompetent has been used in every jurisdiction throughout the world for hundreds of years. Now the hon. gentleman may not like that description of himself, but it is parliamentary, Mr. Speaker. It has been used in this House on numerous occasions. Your Honour probably was not sitting in the Chair. There were others sitting in the Chair. Hansard will bear out what I am saying. It is true. And I would say that the only thing that is bothering the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker,

MR. NEARY: is that he does not like to be described that way. There are two or three members over there who are upper-class, who are snobs and aristocrats and they do not like the scruff, the lower echelon to dare criticize them. And I would say that is all that is wrong with the hon. gentleman. We are all equals, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): To that point of order. I will check Hansard over the weekend and rule on that matter on Monday.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You were just about to have input from the self-appointed expert.

So, Mr. Speaker -

MR. HODDER: Who is also an incompetent.

MR. NEARY: - let me dispose of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) quickly, get rid of him, dispose of him quickly because he is a sick man, he is sick, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. TOBIN: Boys, stop wasting the time of the House.

MR. NEARY: So the thing is for the Premier rather than to start -

MR. TOBIN: Get up and say something 'Garf' that makes some sense.

MR. HOUSE: The Leader of the Opposition is showing how paralyzingly stupid he is.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I thought I already dealt with the Minister of Health (Mr. House). You will notice the ones who are reacting, Mr. Speaker, are the ones that I dealt with severely, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young), the Minister of Finance. You do not hear any rude remarks from the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook).

MR. HODDER: The member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) is just waiting.

MR. NEARY: Now, the member for Burin-Placentia West can wait all he wants. He can wait all he wants.

MR. NEARY:

He just has not got it.

He is not heavy enough.

MR. HODDER:

I disagree. I think he is a

good guy.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the member is

not heavy enough. He is only small potatoes.

MR. HODDER:

I think the member for Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. Stewart), too, should be in the Cabinet.

MR. NEARY:

He is not willing to listen and

learn, Mr. Speaker. That is his problem.

MR. HOUSE:

Terra Nova showed how good you are over there.

SOME HON.MEMBER):

Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY:

There they are.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

MR. TOBIN:

I am heavy enough to knock off

one of your heavies.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, he is only a light-

weight. The hon. gentleman is what I would consider to be a light-weight and I would advise the Premier not to bring him into the Cabinet during his reshuffle.

MR. TULK:

What about Fortune-Hermitage?

He will be all right.

MR. NEARY:

I know the Minister of Education

(Ms. Verge) is waiting for her assessment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY:

No, this is Christmas, Mr. Speaker,

I have to be kind. It is Christmastime, and the only thing I can say is that I like her pretty dress she has on today. I will be kind with the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker, and plow on and advise the Premier to reconsider these matters.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is not a move to make the administration more efficient, it is a move to make the administration more open to political abuse and political patronage. Mr. Speaker, that is what this will do. Now, if the hon. gentleman does not like bringing what he considers to be trivial matters, miscellaneous matters before the Cabinet, the hon. gentleman does not have to go on those days. When we were there we used to have a Cabinet meeting for the important things, for the major items, and we would have a day or two a week set aside to deal with the less important matters, Mr. Speaker, and some days there was quite an agenda of so-called trivial matters. Mr. Speaker, I cannot remember a day when there was nothing on the agenda of Cabinet.

PREMIER PECKFORD: There were things that were not on the agenda that got approved verbally without any research or any study, done for political reasons without any documentation or planning, done for little political deals.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, when I was in the Cabinet I do not know of one example, where any deal was made without Cabinet approval.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Now, that is more than I can say about the Cabinet that the hon. gentleman was a member of. The hon. gentleman was a member of a Cabinet that did all kinds of wheeling and dealing and made all kinds of decisions - and the hon. gentleman, by the way, had to reverse some of these decisions when he became Premier, for instance, giving the former Premier back his house. The previous administration had taken a decision to give Mr. Smallwood back his house for the same price that he sold it to the government, for one dollar. Mr. Moores decided to do that.

MR. TOBIN: Tell us about the day (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, at least he owned it. The present Premier could not do that, but he gave himself a rent-free apartment but he would not give the former Premier back his house for one dollar, Mr. Speaker, he reversed that decision. So you talk about making decisions, Cabinet decisions, Mr. Speaker.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Do you want to get into the house bit?

MR. NEARY: Yes, I would be glad to. If the hon. gentleman wants to, trot it all out. You know, if the hon. gentleman wants to go back over the Smallwood years let us go back over them.

PREMIER PECKFORD: You are the one who is talking about them.

MR. NEARY: No, I am talking about decisions you made.

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

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): Order, please!

The hon. the member for St.

John's North.

MR. CARTER: I think this is a fairly important point of order. I would like the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) to explain if he can how Premier Smallwood managed to build such a luxurious house upon his stated income as Premier of this Province which, if my memory serves me correctly, was something around \$20,000 per year. Would he care to answer that while he is on that subject?

MR. ANDREWS: And how he got all that land on Roaches Line.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman wants the answer, what he should do is go down in the Registry Office, search the registry and he will find out for himself if, indeed, it is any of his business. But the fact of the matter is, that house was turned over

MR. NEARY: to the people of the Province
for one dollar.

MR. CARTER: But how was it built?

MR. WARREN: With hammers and nails.

MR. NEARY: It was built with hammers
and nails and saws and chisels and planes and levels,
Mr. Speaker, and brick and mortar and cement and felt.

MR. ANDREWS: Where did it come from?

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): Order, please!
Are you speaking on this point
of order?

MR. NEARY: No, you had better rule on it, Mr.
Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I must rule there is no point
of order. It is a matter of a difference of opinion.
The hon. the Leader of the
Opposition.

MR. NEARY: So, Mr. Speaker, the hon.
gentleman can snipe all he wants about

MR. NEARY: Cabinet decisions being made, no documentation, but what about that one made by the previous administration to give Mr. Smallwood back his house for one dollar? - and in comes the brave Horatio, the White Knight, and says, 'No, hold it now, reverse that decision. I will give myself a house, and a rent-free apartment,' the first time in Newfoundland's history, 'but I do not want Mr. Smallwood, the former Premier, to own his own home'.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I will do it up front, I will not go through the back door.

MR. NEARY: I see, do it up front, is that so?

PREMIER PECKFORD: Honest and open government.

MR. NEARY: Yes, we know how up front that was.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Yes.

MR. NEARY: As long as you come out and announce that it is supposed to be right, that is supposed to portray honesty and integrity.

PREMIER PECKFORD: And honesty.

MR. NEARY: Yes. What the Premier is saying about this bill is, 'As long as the ministers come and tell me they are entering into agreements for political purposes -

PREMIER PECKFORD: That you cannot deny.

MR. NEARY: Cannot deny what?

PREMIER PECKFORD: Open and honest and straightforward.

MR. NEARY: Open and honest. You cannot be any more open and honest than to give a house to the people of the Province, at least he did not take one away or did not give himself a rent-free apartment.

MR. TOBIN: You had better be careful now while you are up there talking about houses.

MR. NEARY: Yes, do not worry, I can talk about houses.

MR. YOUNG: Tell us how the labour was done on yours.

MR. NEARY: Yes, do you want to know?

MR. YOUNG: Yes.

MR. NEARY: Dollars and cents.

MR. YOUNG: Tell us who did it.

MR. HOUSE: Tell us all about it.

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

MR. NEARY: The Premier is the one who talks about innuendo and libel and slander. I hope the hon. gentleman is listening to what is coming from the lips of his ministers.

MR. YOUNG: It is true what I am saying.

MR. NEARY: It is not true, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it could only come from the lips of somebody who was seriously ill, sick, Mr. Speaker, someone who has been sniffing too much embalming fluid.

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

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

MR. SIMMS: Mr. Speaker, I regret very much having to rise on this point of order. I think we are all going to be seriously ill and sick if we have to listen to much more of what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) has had to say in the last hour. And I think as a privilege to members of this House, we have every right to know how much time the hon. the Leader of the Opposition has remaining in his speaking time, because if we have to put up with any more of that, maybe we have time to leave.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. McNicholas): To that point of order,
the hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: I am not sure that I want to
sit in this Legislature very much longer when I hear
members on the other side asking the Leader of the
Opposition (Mr. Neary) about his own personal home.
I mean, if that is the kind of dirt that is going to be
thrown back and forth, I have some dirt to throw. I know
things about every member over there as perhaps they know
about me. Questions were asked in this House about the
Auditor General's report and the Premier reached down
to - if he has the dirt, throw it out. He has been
threatening to throw it out, throw it out!

MR. SIMMS: That has nothing to do with
the point of order! The point fo order is how much time
is left?

MR. HODDER: Because, Mr. Speaker, the
level of debate in this House has been so low that when
we start casting personal aspersions - you know, are we
going to go back to the days of Sir Richard Squires? Are
we going to go back to the days of Sir Robert Bond? Or
do we go back to the Tories who voted away democracy in
this Province and put us into the 'dirty thirties'? Is
that the type of debate we are having here, when we ask
questions of the government about the Green Bay ferry?
Are those the tactics?

MR. NEARY: Right on!

MR. HODDER: And the press are so stupid,
Mr. Speaker, as to play it up, something that happened
twelve years ago.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. YOUNG: I would like to speak also
to that point of order, especially the point raised by
the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder).

Mr. Speaker, I can sit here
and the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary)
can attack my private business, attack me personally,
and when I slap something across the floor which I know
is true, Mr. Speaker, he gets upset. If he is living in
a glass house, I do not think, Mr. Speaker, he should throw
stones. Because he is going to get dirt from me, and lots
of it!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!
To that point of order, the
hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, in the first
instance, the hon. gentleman is wrong, because I did not
attack his personal life.

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, you did.

MR. NEARY: And, Mr. Speaker, in the second
place, what I was talking about was the Premier's apartment
and the Premier's house, which are being paid for out of
taxpayer money.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Honestly and up front.

MR. NEARY: Honestly, up front! As long as
you announce it, the hon. gentleman thinks that is okay.

MR. NEARY: Now, Mr. Speaker, let me say this to hon. gentlemen, if I was the hon. the Premier I would make a note of where the dirt started to come from this morning across the House. Now, if the hon. gentleman wants his ministers -

PREMIER PECKFORD: You were up speaking and -

MR. NEARY: I was talking about the hon. gentleman's -

PREMIER PECKFORD: - accusing everybody.

MR. NEARY: Now if the hon. gentleman wants that level of debate to continue let him say so and I guarantee you that we will shovel it across the House, Mr. Speaker, like he never saw before in his life.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

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

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, I just have a couple of questions to ask the Premier. When the Premier introduced the bill he introduced it with very few words, almost to imply it is a housekeeping bill. But I would like to ask the Premier, and I would like for him to respond when he gets up, why is it that the Premier would give his ministers or certain ministers the right to enter into contract agreements without approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council? Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Cabinet, once a government is formed, runs the Province subject to certain limitations, as if they were a dictatorship, in a sense, they run the government. The only thing they have to keep in mind is that they must sit in this House of Assembly once or twice a year and answer questions from the Opposition. And the other restriction on the Cabinet's authority is the fact that

MR. HODDER: they must look to a general election now under the Constitution, but normally, traditionally, every five years there must be an election - five years from the day that the House sits. So I would like to ask the Premier, which he did not explain when he got up, why it is that he did not tell us why he is making those particular moves in those different departments? This particular bill changes the system of government. It means that decisions that were normally made in Cabinet will not be made in Cabinet from now on, they will be made by individual ministers which seems to me, Mr. Speaker, to be a watering down of the Cabinet system of government, where the Cabinet is held responsible. We heard the Premier - I did not hear it, but it was reported to me that on the public airways last night he said something about - it was a Cabinet minister and he did not know what went on in every department. Mr. Speaker, from what I can gather from this bill he will know less of what goes on in departments if ministers are allowed to join into contracts and into certain agreements which they heretofore could not do. And I would like to hear the Premier when he stands give us reasons, why each department, not in a general way but I would like to hear why in each department which he has spelled out, he has spelled out the Department of Development, the Department of Education, the Department of the Environment, Fisheries, Forest Resources and Lands, Mines and Energy, Municipal Affairs, Public Works and Services, Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development and Social Services, why these departments are being given this special authority which they did not before have, and why is it that we would make this particular move? I would feel much safer, Mr. Speaker, if the Cabinet itself is responsible for acts that take place in various departments and that these decisions are made in Cabinet. Then, Mr. Speaker, you know, the people who were elected to govern this Province

MR. HODDER: collectively which is the Cabinet, because the backbenchers do not govern this Province, not as much as we do here, they sit and wait. They may have a suggestive role to the Cabinet, perhaps moreso than those in the Opposition, but at least we can voice ours publicly. But I wonder why it is that he would take away from the authority of Cabinet and put it into the hands of ministers? It just does not make sense to me. I feel that it is in the public interest that when Cabinet makes a decision it is the government who made the decision and the government who must stand by it, it cannot be

MR. HODDER: sloughed off on a minister, sloughed off on a department. I think that is a very serious question and I would like the Premier, when he stands, to explain to us why this is happening and why it is happening in these departments and not in other departments?

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): If the hon. Premier speaks now he will close the debate. The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, it is really extremely unfortunate that we have to, as the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) said just a few minutes ago, put up with what we have heard in the last hour or so. The debate and the decorum in this House has hit a new low, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) up swinging his arms and being irrelevant just about all the time on the bill, an unbelievable exercise or misuse of the way this House should be operated. It is just an awful example of why, I suppose, they are over there and we are over here. It is just terrible! He said very little that was relevant to the bill, He never talked about the principle of the bill as you are supposed to do in second reading, but, you know, that is quite alright, that is the way the Leader of the Opposition wants to operate. I guess he can operate that way but it is just a waste of the time of the House, that is the only problem, when we could be getting on to more substantial and meaningful matters.

The member for Port Au Port (Mr. Hodder) did raise them, so any more comments on the speech by the Leader of the Opposition would be unworthy of me or any hon. member, to even comment on it would just be giving some credence to an extremely irrelevant speech and one which just tended to lower the decorum of the House. ~~And~~ I will not

MR. HODDER: even comment any further on what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) had to say, I do not expect to go down to his level on that. As far as what the member for Port Au Port (Mr. Hodder) had to say in his questions. I cannot understand. All we are trying to do here is under certain terms and conditions allow ministers - and they do it now, you would not know but were doing something strange. And talking about operating a dictatorship, here it is giving ministers more power rather than it all having to come to Cabinet or to the Premier. So this whole idea of arrogance or dictatorial methods, this is the antithesis of that, this is the very opposite of that. So, you know, those kinds of claims and ongoing empty allegations cannot be substantiated and this is a good example of it. All this bill is trying to do, as I said when I introduced it, and there is nothing hair-raising about that if you look at some jurisdictions, some provinces and the federal government and the power that the various ministers have, I mean, it is absolutely incredible. There were a number of bills put through the House of Commons in the last year or so and it is absolutely incredible - the power that has been given to ministers such as the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. De Bane) has, for example, right now in the Government of Canada, I mean, it is unbelievable! He does not have to go back to Cabinet for anything; he can spend large sums of money, enter into agreements, allocate massive amounts of the nation's resource without even going back to Cabinet. The key to this bill is simply that the terms and conditions under which ministers can enter into agreements will be set by the

PREMIER PECKFORD: Cabinet, will be set by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. I think it is a good move. Ministers are sworn to their jobs; they have a job to do, it is ministerial power and authority and these ministers are responsible to the House, responsible to this legislature,

PREMIER PECKFORD: have to work within certain guidelines that are set down by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, and to me it is just a bill which helps assist the ministers and the departments do their jobs. So I see nothing sinister or weird about this bill, it is just, as I say, a method to streamline the operations of government under certain terms and conditions. And this is what the ministers get paid to do, that is part of their responsibilities, and be responsible to this House and to participate in discussions of Cabinet under regulations and legislation passed by this Legislature. I mean, that is all it is. Very, very often in many jurisdictions and in this jurisdiction a lot of very ordinary - I mean, the terms and conditions are the key to this bill, under what terms and conditions and how big the agreements can be or how small they can be. When those regulations are made up and those terms and conditions, then everybody can see it and then they will know whether the ministers can sign big agreements or small agreements and all the rest of it. And remember it says, 'The minister may'. In most cases if anything of any size comes up it is not, 'The minister must sign', 'has to sign', 'and cannot bring it back to Cabinet', 'the minister may sign agreements under certain specified terms and conditions.' Anybody appointed to a ministry will always just out of sheer common sense, if a certain agreement comes up and it is within the terms and conditions laid down by Cabinet very often will they do it now all the time - will come back and say, 'Look, I have the power to do this but it is a little bit irregular, unusual, not in the terms and conditions, we have not done one with this company before I would just like the advice of my colleagues'. This is just a

PREMIER PECKFORD: normal, democratically operational process that we are talking about here and this bill has nothing sinister or unusual about it. It is a very normal practice. If you look at some of the provinces of Canada, the ministries and the power that they have been given through the Legislatures by the Cabinets, after it has been passed through the Houses, you will see they are far more widespread than we have in this Province, that Cabinet has, for the most part, held onto a lot of crazy things. Like in the next bill that is coming up now, powers of appointment, for example, the school boards and the hospital boards and things like that. The next bill is another attempt to streamline the operations of government. But if there is something unusual or irregular, any minister worth his salt or worth her salt is going to bring it before Cabinet just to protect themselves, to ensure that they are not doing something that is wrong. If we do not have enough trust in a minister, a member who has been appointed to the ministry, to do that under the advice from deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers and all the rest of them, then we should not have a ministry. I mean, you have to delegate authority and you have to trust certain ministers to do certain work. If they do not do the work, then that will be handled, too, in due course. This is an attempt just to do that and as I say, many, many jurisdictions in the democratic world have decentralized the decision-making authority far more from Cabinet to the ministers than we have done in this Province. And we do not intend to do it holus-bolus, we are doing it very slowly and let us see how it works under specific terms and conditions. Now, I think the operative part of all of this is when the terms and conditions are set up the Opposition should look at them and then see

PREMIER PECKFORD: whether those terms and conditions are ones which are not too large or not too wide-sweeping, not too much discretionary power, that the terms and conditions are specific, then you will have an idea whether in fact what is being done is something that is really not necessary. But the other thing the Opposition should do, they should not just come in and make allegations like they did this morning, is check out the other provinces, see what kind of delegation from Cabinet to the ministries has been done then they could stand in their places with some evidence and some rational thought and with some good argument elevate the level of debate by demonstrating that in the jurisdiction called

PREMIER PECKFORD:

the federal government here is the kind of delegation that occurs from Cabinet to the ministries in the Province of Nova Scotia, or some other comparable province like ours. Here is the kind of delegation that goes on. Then if they could submit, Mr. Speaker, to the House evidence to demonstrate that we are doing something here which is irregular in comparison or in contrast with other provinces of equal size or jurisdiction of equal size, well, then they would be sustaining their argument, then they would be making a point and being able to prove it. But just to get up and make allegations as they have made here this morning just does nothing for the House and does nothing for the debate. It does nothing for this bill, it does nothing to help the government. I mean, the Opposition is there to provide constructive criticism on bills that are brought in by the government. But what we have seen this morning is just the opposite of that. It is just wild and weird statements and trying to build up his ego, the Leader of the Opposition, by picking out one minister after another and calling them incompetent and ignorant and other such words unbecoming of a member, as far as I am concerned, and he did not apply himself to the bill.

The member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) tried to grab the attention of the House and to reverse all that his leader had done by asking some questions on the bill, you know, tried to excuse his leader. The member for Port au Port at least tried to deal with it on a relevant basis, and what the member for Port au Port actually did in what he said is, I do not agree with what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) just said, my leader said for the last hour. That is what the member for Port au Port actually said, my leader has embarrassed me and I have

PREMIER PECKFORD: to get up as Opposition House Leader and stand up and ask questions relevant to the bill. So, I mean, it is quite obvious.

But once again let me just come back, the thrust of this bill, the principle of this bill is simply to delegate certain matters to the ministries rather than to come to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council under specific terms and conditions. And, therefore, the operative part of this whole bill will be to examine and scrutinize the terms and conditions under which certain authorities are delegated to the ministries. And the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. That is what it is all about.

In my view I think it is a good piece of legislation and we will see how it works and see what the terms and conditions are in a year or two years from now, then we will have a better opportunity at that point in time to see whether in fact this was a bill which helped streamline the operations of government and, at the same time, have the right checks and balances there to ensure that things were done right and proper in all of the departments to which it applies.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend Certain Acts Respecting Government Departments To Provide The Power For Ministers To Enter Into Agreements Subject To Specified Terms And Conditions", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill No. 19).

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act Respecting Certain Powers Of Appointment". (Bill No. 62).

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I referred to this one a few minutes ago. Again it is along the lines of

PREMIER PECKFORD: the previous bill, only this time it has to do with powers of appointment, and many of the appointments that now have to come to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The purpose of this bill as it says in the explanatory note, is to transfer from the Lieutenant-Governor in Council or the Lieutenant-Governor, as the case may be, to the appropriate minister the authority to make appointments of a routine nature.

And covered under this as everybody can see in the analysis on the bill, the title: the Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, the Children's Hospital Management Act, The Commissioner For Oaths Act. Right now all of that has to come to Cabinet. The Attorney General through a recommendation from a provincial judge somewhere in the Province wants - the provincial judge sends in a letter to the Attorney General and says, in a certain part of my jurisdiction here there are a few communities, they do not have a Commissioner of Oaths. For example, in my own constituency if there is nobody on Long Island or Beaumont or Lushes Bight who is a Commissioner of Oaths, there is no Justice of the Peace there, you know, in most cases you only really need now a Commissioner of Oaths, so the provincial judge knows about this, he recommends a name to the Attorney General to be appointed to be Commissioner of Oaths in that community. For example, in the hon. members for Fogo's (Mr. Tulk) district, why should somebody have to go from Tilting to Fogo to get a document signed - right? - by a Commissioner of Oaths, something to apply for UIC, or workers' compensation, or whatever? It happens to be some document.

PREMIER PECKFORD: So what happens now is that when that name comes from the provincial judge, the deputy minister and the minister have to prepare a Cabinet submission, then it has to be routed into the system then come to the Cabinet for approval. Well, I mean the Attorney General, should have that kind of authority, to be able to just approve that kind of recommendation from a provincial judge, for example. The General Hospital Management Act for the Minister of Health (Mr. House), the Justices Act, the Local School Tax Act, and all these other acts where there are appointments made to boards and this kind of thing, that under this piece of legislation well, then, the ministers will be able to have the authority to make the appointments that are recommended to them.

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible)

PREMIER PECKFORD: Well, it depends on which act you are talking about. But in just about all these cases the recommendations come in from the organizations concerned, I think in every single one it does. You know, if there is a vacancy on the Western Memorial Hospital Corporation, for example, over there, there will be a recommendation come in from the board, from the Chairman. Just about in every case, I think, you will find that recommendations come in that way and nine times out of ten Cabinet approves whatever has been recommended by that organization. If there is a vacancy I know, for example, again in my own constituency, on the Green Bay Health Board which takes care of both the hospital and the senior citizens home, I think in every case when a recommendations comes in to fill a vacancy it has been done, but that has to come to Cabinet. I mean, there is no need of that. If you have a ministry they should have that kind of discretionary power to just approve rather than waste all the paper and the time of all Cabinet on these kinds of approvals, because most of them, as

PREMER PECKFORD: I say, are regular appointments that are made on recommendation from the organizations that come under these various acts. So, you know, it is just as simple as that and I think that it is high time that these kinds of duties, responsibilities which have now been at the Cabinet table be referred back to the ministers. Now there are others that there should not be. There is in the government right now each week the following meetings, they start on Monday and go through to Thursday: Planning and Priority every week; Resource Policy Committee every week; Social Policy Committee every week and Treasury Board, which is another committee of Cabinet, every week. And all those papers flow through to get to Cabinet by Thursday, so all the meetings have to be held before Thursday. And then there is another very important Cabinet meeting that is a routine Cabinet meeting which usually takes care of these more routine matters anyway. The Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey) is Chairman of that and the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) is Vice-Chairman of it and they handle these kinds of activities. But there are some that even I think should not be in routine Cabinet, like some of these. Now, there are a whole range of other areas that I believe ~~that~~ we should not bring in legislation on and refer it back down to the ministers for their authority so that, therefore, there will still be a lot of work for the routine Cabinet to do even with taking away this kind of authority and putting it down into the ministries.

That is the system that is in place right now and, you know, I feel personally that these kinds of appointments - I mean, I am not all that concerned about who the person is if they are recommended by the hospital board out there to fill a vacancy or something like that. Or if there is a new home being built and this

PREMIER PECKFORD: committee has been formed for five or six years, sometimes eight or ten years, so this committee makes recommendations as to who is going to sit on it. These are the people who worked and fought to get the facility. It is no interest of mine. I think it should be an interest of the ministers and of the department to see that yes, these are substantial people, good representatives of the community, respected, have been on these committees for years, well, go ahead and appoint them to the hospital board. And I think that is the way it should be done. I do not think we should be pre-occupied with who they are as long as they are people who are competent and capable, and that can be determined by the department rather than coming up to Cabinet.

MR. TULK: Can the ministers still resort to Cabinet?

PREMIER PECKFORD: Oh, sure, oh, yes sure, the lines of responsibility are still there but, I mean, there is no need of it coming up and getting into a discussion over names in this place or that place, let the department that committee is responsible to make recommendations, let the recommendations just come to the deputy minister and the minister and then they make the decision on it. Like I say, nine times out of ten, you know, you are going to approve everybody who is there anyway.

MR. WARREN: Do you think the minister should consult with the member for the area before doing it?

PREMIER PECKFORD: Oh, yes, I agree that the minister has to use discretion on that, but consultation with the member for the area, sure, absolutely. And, you know, the members should know then where they can go. And not only that, it is even better for the Opposition in that case because you know it is in the minister's hands. The minister now can always say, 'Well, that has to go to Cabinet. Well, I

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PREMIER PECKFORD: understand your point of view,
you know, or whatever, but I will pass it along. So it
gets lost in the system. But now if the member

PREMIER PECKFORD: for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder), has somebody recommended from his district and it comes under the aegis of this act now, the member can come to the minister and say, 'Now, you cannot tell me anymore that this is a Cabinet decision,' and if it gets lost in that great collective mass then you cannot blame it on anybody, but you can go right to the minister and say, 'Now, you have the authority. This is not anybody else's authority, this is your authority. I want to submit this name for this board or whatever, and I want you to consider it.' The argument back is, of course, then you are obligating politics to play a role in it. I mean, members have certain responsibilities, and one responsibility is to know your district well enough so that if there are appointments coming up like those that come under this act, you will then arrange a meeting with the minister and go in and make your argument. So I do not think it needs to be put into the act, I think it is a normal responsibility that members have. I think everybody would agree that this is a far better way of doing it then the process that is there. I, for one, do not want to see the names. It is like the new hospital out in the Leader of the Opposition's (Mr. Neary) district. I mean, I do not care, I just want to see whoever the best people are get on that board, and that should be done by the department in consultation with the committee.

MR. NEARY: They had a party out there the other day and they did not even invite the original members of the board who were on the board when the hospital was decided upon.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Well, that should not be, that is not nice.

MR. NEARY: That was not your department, now.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I did not hear about that.

In any case, I think it gives members a far better access to have some input, because you know exactly it is the minister and it does not get lost in that whole Cabinet process, Because, as everybody knows, all a minister had to say was it was gone to Cabinet, 'There is nothing I can do about it,' you know, 'and I am not allowed to tell you what was said in Cabinet.'

So, in any case, I think it is a good piece of legislation and I really do not see anything wrong with it, it seems to be straightforward.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, the Premier says that the Cabinet is preoccupied and he says that it is the same type of legislation as the one we just saw. Well, I will admit, Mr. Speaker, that it is certainly not as damaging as the last piece of legislation that just went through this House.-

MR. NEARY: It is dangerous though.

MR. HODDER: - but it is certainly dangerous. The Premier has said that the discussion of names will just go down one level lower, but, Mr. Speaker, we all know,

MR. HODDER: and anybody who has been watching politics and watching the boards in this Province certainly knows, that the vast majority of boards in this Province are riddled with supporters of the government, starting with Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, and you can look at almost any board and it is full of them. I once had to appear before the Tenancy Board, that particular body, and just looked through to see who was on that particular board and all of them were friends of the government, former campaign workers, former Tories. If you look at the Board of Directors of BRINCO, of the Churchill Falls-Labrador Corporation, you see that they are friends and supporters of the government.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we would like to see instituted in this legislation, and we would agree with the bill, is if the Premier would spell out who should be consulted by the minister on those particular appointments. Because, Mr. Speaker, I just saw a situation happen in the Town of Stephenville where a member was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Bay St. George Community College, a great supporter of the government, but no more qualified to run an educational board than I am to pilot the Challenger to orbit, and there were all sorts of problems. He was just a Tory hack who was appointed chairman of that particular board and I might say, Mr. Speaker, I was in a roundabout way consulted about that. Of course, you can be consulted but nothing ever comes of it. But they put a person there who just about destroyed the whole board of directors and it became a scandal throughout the Town of Stephenville. And the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) knows of whom I speak. He is no longer there, the minister had the good sense to remove him. I mean, a man who went around turning down thermostats in the Bay St. George Community College.

But, Mr. Speaker, that sort of thing happens. We know how appointments are done in this Province. This has been the most political government, As for appointments and that sort of thing, they have refined patronage like it was never refined before. At least in the former, former administration every once in a while a token Tory was put there; that does not happen anymore Mr. Speaker. Anyone who is appointed to a board here must support the government. That is what the Ombudsman's report, which was brought up in the House on a number of occasions already,

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, I do not mind, but the Premier used the best example possible when he talked about the Commissioner for Oaths Act. Certainly if there is a Commissioner of Oaths to be appointed down in Green Bay or down in Fogo, yes, I think that possibly in that particular case the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) should make that appointment, whoever he might be. We have a good one now, we might not have a good one later, but I think in those cases they look for the most competent people who are able to do the job. But when we come to other boards, such as the General Hospital Board, or school tax authorities or people under the Schools Act, then that is a different case.

There is something else I would like to say about that, Mr. Speaker. Why is it that we still have appointments to school boards? Why cannot we have fully elected school boards in this Province? And one other thing I would like to ask about is the school tax authorities are appointed. Now the school tax authorities, and it has been said on our side we would rather do without the school tax authorities and take the money out of general revenue, but having said that, and knowing full well that there are school tax authorities in this Province, why is it that they are appointed since they take our tax dollars? The school tax authority takes a bigger gouge out of the rural areas of this Province than any other authority. Now I say this knowing a little about school tax authorities. I was a principal of a school at one time and I have had dealings with the boards and I have had dealings with school tax authorities and I know what the idea of the school board is. You have two or three school boards who decide that they want more funds, and particularly in the last few years since the government has been cutting back, and cutting back and cutting back on education, which means that the school boards themselves do not have any money for operating.

MR. HODDER: Then they go to the School Tax Authority, because they recommend who goes on that School Tax Authority subject to the minister or to the Cabinet, they recommend who goes on that School Tax Authority. Then their mandate is not for the people who they collect the money from, their mandate is to gouge the people of that area as much as they possibly can because their bosses are the school boards and the government, and the government has now withdrawn itself and that is why the government likes School Tax Authorities. The government has drawn itself away. The School Tax Authorities is a very black group. In most communities you do not even know who they are because they do not like to publish the fact that they are on the School Tax Authority, I happen to know that because someone very close to me is a member of the School Tax Authority.

DR. COLLINS: How close?

MR. HODDER: Very close.

But I believe, Mr. Speaker, that School Tax Authorities should be elected, because they are a taxation group.

MR. TULK: Abolished.

MR. HODDER: Abolished? Yes. Certainly. I already made that point a few minutes ago. But since they are there and since government is running them, I believe they should be elected. I do not think there should be any elected members to school boards as well. Why not have a system whereby these people -

MR. TULK: No elected members?

MR. HODDER: No elected members to school boards - all elected members to school boards is what I am saying. I have said it before and I am repeating myself, but I believe that there should be no more appointments to

MR. HODDER: school boards. I do not see why we cannot trust the general public of this Province to elect all of their school members, I believe that the school boards are operating very well and I fail to see why there should be appointed members.

But having said that, Mr. Speaker, what bothers me about this bill is the way things are now rather than the things that will be. I know it is passed down one more. The only thing that means is that the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) can now appoint more of her friends. Before she would have to go to Cabinet and she would have to say to Cabinet, 'These are the people that I nominate.' And somebody in Cabinet would say, 'Well, we think you are a little bit off here.' Now she has that authority to do whatever she wants.

MS. VERGE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): A point of order, the hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: The question raised by the member opposite about having more school board and school tax authority members elected I think is a good one, which I hope we will have an opportunity to debate more fully at a later time.

MR. TULK: What is your point of order?

MS. VERGE: But I would like to correct a wrong impression that the hon. member is leaving. In fact, all appointments to school boards and school tax authorities are now initiated by the school boards themselves, the church authorities themselves with which school boards are affiliated, or with voting as provided for in The Schools Act. Cabinet simply rubberstamps the recommendations that comes forward from the Denominational Education Committees, which in turn are generated by a number of ways, either through the

MS. VERGE: church authorities themselves,
through the existing school boards themselves or through the
result of voting. And school tax authorities comprise
members of school boards who are initiated by the
Denominational Education Committees or municipalities.

MS. VERGE: So, in fact, I, as the Minister of Education, or the other members of the government have no say over the names of the people who are in the end appointed to school boards or school tax authorities. All of the names are initiated by the church authorities or municipalities in the case of school tax authorities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): To that point of order, the hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: I would just like to ask the minister if the government always accepts those and was there ever a case when the government did not accept the appointments or recommendations and had gone back and made suggestions as to other people?

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, the hon. the Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge - and I can speak with certainty about the four and a half years that I have been Minister of Education - government has always accepted without question, without discussion, the names that are given to us by the Denominational Education Committees, soon to be officially renamed Denominational Education Councils, for appointments for school boards. And school tax authorities by legislation are made up of a majority of school board members whose names are generated by school boards and a minority of municipalities' representatives and to my knowledge the government has never questioned any of the names that come forward. In fact, Cabinet is now rubber stamping names which

MS. VERGE: originate in outside agencies and which are simply processed in a bureaucratic way by the officials and Minister of the Department of Education.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please!

To that point of order, I rule that the hon. minister took the opportunity to explain how certain boards under her jurisdiction are appointment and the hon. the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) took the opportunity to ask a question of the minister, so there is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her comments. I would ask the minister if she would find some system by which to appoint boards of directors to groups like the Bay St. George Community College, which I referred to earlier. I would point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that the minister has the power, but obviously, with august groups like the church and the school boards, the minister takes the right tack. Mr. Speaker, I will emphasize again the fact that I see no reason why many of these people who are appointed should be appointed and why they should not be elected. But there are other cases in the Province and these are spelled out in the act, the General Hospital Management Act. In some cases I have no doubt that there are recommendations made but when you look at boards across the Province, particularly ones that are left out of this particular piece of legislation as well, your hospital boards throughout the Province, all of the hospital boards throughout the Province, appointments are made. I can tell you that I know of cases, Mr. Speaker, many cases, where the people who were put on these hospital boards are not suggested to the minister, the minister just appoints.

MR. HODDER: The minister appoints the chairman of a hospital board when a chairman of a hospital board resigns and, Mr. Speaker, I do not know how it works in this area but I will certainly tell you that you can look at any board that is appointed by this government in any part of Western Newfoundland and you will find they are all supporters of the provincial government. It is a total scandal what happened in the Bay St. George Community College, and that is under the minister's department. There is not one person other than known Conservative workers with possibly the exception of one on that whole board. There is a possible exception, there is a question mark in my mind. It is the one who comes from my district and I think that a possibility. But every

MR. HODDER:

other one of them are known supporters of the administration.

I walk down to campaign headquarters in Stephenville all the time just to have a look at all the appointees. They even appoint little boards now. With Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, if you want to get a low rental house there is a little board that meets, They are a little nest of Tories who were appointed after

the 1975 provincial election and they sit and decide who get this and who gets what. I do not know what remuneration they get, Mr. Speaker, but they certainly are these people who again at election time, you can wander down and see just how they stand.

Appointing friends of government has been refined, it no longer matters, with the possible exception of the Economic Council of Newfoundland. I suppose that being such a high profile, or the Premier wanted to make it such a high profile, he made an effort to try to put as many non-partisan people on there as he could. Mr. Speaker, I see nothing wrong with putting Tories on boards, I see nothing wrong with putting Liberals on boards, as long as it is not blatant. I believe that members who made up a board should be the most competent people around and their political affiliation should never, never be questioned, what they are, whether they are New Democratic party, Rhinoceros party, Liberal party, Conservative party.

Particularly those of us who live in rural areas, who really know who these people are and how upfront they are with the Tory party, we watch the appointments being made. The Board of Directors of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing - I believe that

MR.HODDER: is what they are called -

MR.NEARY: That is right.

MR.HODDER: I mean, when you look across and you see the big supporters of the Tory party, all being appointed just prior to Christmas, I think it was, last year, those of us, particularly those in rural areas know them. And I might say to the Premier it bothers people. The ministers or whoever recommend these people, it hurts you politically. Because there is a feeling growing up in this Province you cannot appoint everybody, you can only appoint so many, and when the names come out in the newspaper, the reaction is, 'There they are again, they are all friends of the government.' Now that is not the way to appoint people to boards. Mr. Speaker, with that I conclude

MR.CALLAN: Mr. Speaker.

MR.SPEAKER (AYLWARD): The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR.CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to have a few words on this bill as well. I disagree with the bill, Mr. Speaker, not that it makes very much sense or very much difference because whether it is done by an individual minister or done by the Cabinet you still have the same situation.

MR.NEARY: They are still going to be Tories.

MR.CALLAN: That is right, you still have the same situation. It may take a little longer if it has to go before Cabinet and that sort of thing rather than the minister doing it himself or herself directly, but that is the only difference it is going to make. As far as talking about appointments and so on, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) still has not explained, and, of course, he cannot explain, his actions at Jack's Pond Park. We know how incompetent he is. He went out to Swift

MR. CALLAN: Current and closed down a park and made it a day use park only, And then the following season had to come back and put it the way it was previously, overnight camping. And that is just one example. We saw another example a few days ago regarding the caribou in Labrador, no consultation or anything else. But, Mr. Speaker, you talk about appointments and power of ministers; for example, last year in this legislature when appointments were being made to provincial parks around the Province, I asked the minister in the Legislature on several occasions about some appointments for Jack's Pond Park. The minister, of course, in his usual way, as is the case with most of the ministers opposite-and the Premier, of course, is the leader in evasive answers and side-stepping - the minister said appointments will be made in due course. Well, Mr. Speaker, when the appointments, the four positions on Jack's Pond provincial park were made public, or when I managed to get them from the minister's department, there was one young lady, a third year university student who lives in Arnold's Cove, her father is the Anglican minister there, and this young lady was looking for a job on Jack's Pond provincial park, which is about two or three miles away from Arnold's Cove, and the lady did not get the job first nor last. You know, they talk about local preference policy and so on.

MR. CALLAN: Of course, one female got appointed, out of the four there was one female, that was great. You know, Women Libbers, etc., that was great! Why could it not have been Pamela Jones in Arnold's Cove? Who do you think it was, Mr. Speaker? It was a girl from Bell Island - had no connections! - and to add insult to injury, Mr. Speaker, this same minister had to go and spend all kinds of money on Jack's Pond Park to make the house there, which I stayed in because I worked there as a student at university, liveable for males and females.

When the young woman from Arnold's Cove -

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): On a point of order, the hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, we are not amending the Public Commission Act, this is a power of appointment to boards. This has no relevancy whatsoever.

MR. CALLAN: You look after Martin Hussey and go in and tell him all the lies you told during the by-election.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!
To that point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman again is asleep. He should be down trying to get the user-fees in hospitals straightened out. There is no point of order. My hon. colleague is relevant. We are talking about a bill that will put the power to make appointments in the hands of ministers, Mr. Speaker. So what could be more

MR. NEARY: relevant than what my hon. colleague is talking about?

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please!

To that point of order, I will remind the hon. the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) that we are discussing Bill No. 62, which has to do with the procedure for appointing different boards.

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: And not only that, Mr. Speaker, not only did this female come from Bell Island, but the other three employees came from Conception Bay when there were applicants there from all around the area.

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

I will once again remind the hon. the member for Bellevue that we are not discussing appointments for Summer jobs in provincial parks, we are discussing appointments to certain boards.

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, as I said when I stood, all this bill will do is make what is happening now a lot easier to happen, it will happen a lot faster now that the minister does not have to go before Cabinet and get approval for the sorts of things that we are talking about. It will make this administration, Mr. Speaker, a lot more political than it already is and, God knows, it is political enough now!

The Minister of Forestry

(Mr. Power), Mr. Speaker prides himself and comes and tells us about all of the jobs that he gets for his constituents in the Spring of the year. He goes out and personally appoints them to jobs that should be open, of course, to Newfoundlanders all over who want to apply for them, but

MR. CALLAN: they do not get them, as I said, because of the political process.

This government, this administration, Mr. Speaker, day by day in every way possible plays politics with appointments. All of the furore that we heard about the

Rural Development associations, the only reason, Mr. Speaker, there was such a fuss kicked up about it was because in 90 per cent of the cases around this Province, they are treated as PC Associations.

I happen to be a member of the Rural Development Association in my own home town. And what do you have there on that one? I happen to be a member. I am there because I want to play the role of a watchdog. And, Mr. Speaker, what do we have there? We have three members of the Tory executive for the district of Bellevue sitting on that Rural Development Association.

AN HON. MEMBER: How did they get there?

MR. CALLAN: How did they get there?

How did they get there! A good question, 'How did they get there?' Mr. Speaker, you know, it is bad enough for this government to try to infiltrate the hospital boards and the school tax authorities and try to infiltrate

MR. CALLAN: school tax authorities and try to infiltrate rural development associations and treat them as Tory district associations, but the last straw, Mr. Speaker and I do not know what service organization the member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) belongs to, I do not know how many social clubs he belongs to, or social organizations, perhaps he is a member of the Kiwanis and a dozen others - but the last straw, Mr. Speaker, was an effort by this government to try to infiltrate the Lions Clubs and other service clubs in the Province, And I have seen it. And the member who is standing in the doorway, Mr. Speaker, is living proof. For the first time in the history of Lionism since I have been associated with it we had from Marystown greetings from MHAs. It never happened in Lionism history. It was done. It is just another example of how this government is trying to infiltrate service clubs. That gentleman, Mr. Speaker, should not have been allowed in the hotel, let alone into a convention.

Now he is going to stand on his point of order, Mr. Speaker. Let us see what he has to say.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): A point of order, the hon. the member for Burin-Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the hon. member is trying to get at but I have never been a member of the Lions organization, and presently I am not a member of the Lions organization.

MR. CALLAN: That is right. That is right. That is why you should not have been allowed in the hotel.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, I rule that the hon. member used the opportunity to clarify a situation.

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. NEARY: And he is going to do that and then run out of the House.

MR. CALLAN: Yes. I do not know what that point of order was, Mr. Speaker. Obviously it was nothing. That is why I said he should not have been allowed in the hotel. People who work day in and night out to try and raise thousands of dollars for the handicapped and all the other people in this Province, and then to have it infiltrated by people who want to play political games with it it is sickening. But it just goes to show how low that this administration can stoop to try to hold on to power.

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

MR. SPEAKER (AYLWARD): A point of order, the hon. the member for Burin-Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN: I attended that function. I was honoured to attend that function at the invitation of the Lions Association, and I will continue to attend them, Mr. Speaker, if I am invited.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CALLAN: Why do you not have the guts to join it and do something, some free labour?

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, I rule there is not a point of order.

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: So, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I am totally against this bill, and I am totally against political appointments and the way the members of this administration are blatantly playing around and insulting the intelligence and playing around with the lives of young people and old, but especially young people who are trying to pay their way through University and they cannot get a job because the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) wants to put his own friends and his own

MR. CALLAN: cohorts in there. This bill, Mr. Speaker, goes another step towards this infiltration process that I have been talking about.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to have a few words on this bill. Unfortunately, the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) is not in her seat because the minister was trying to leave the impression, I suppose following the example of the Premier (Mr. Peckford) when he introduced the bill, when he said that there will be more consultation now. Mr. Speaker, how gullible and how naive does the hon. gentleman think we are on this side of the House? The fact of the matter is that nothing will change as a result of this bill except, as my colleague just said, the administration now will become more political. It will speed up the political appointments, that is all it will do. Mr. Speaker, now you will see Tories getting appointed right, left and center.

The Minister of Education, who was sitting there a moment ago so sanctimonious and pure, Mr. Speaker, is the king of them all. The supervisor of training for resource development in the minister's department is the chief Tory organizer and was in the Terra Nova by-election, The supervisor of training for resource development, which is a big job! Now, how does that individual get involved in organizing for the Tory Party? Does he resign his position every time an election comes up? How can the minister explain that? I am glad the minister is back in her seat now because

MR. NEARY: I will ask the question again.
How is it that the supervisor for resource development is also the chief party organizer for the Tory Party? How can the minister explain that, Mr. Speaker?

This is a very dangerous piece of legislation. It is not quite as bad as the one we debated earlier, putting the authority for entering into contracts and making appointments into the hands of incompetent ministers, but all that is going to happen now, Mr. Speaker, is that the process for making political appointments will be speeded up somewhat. And the Premier (Mr. Peckford) will have the excuse, now when they get caught with their hand in the cookie jar as they did in the Auditor General's report, and he will say, 'I did not know about it', and he will probably turn around and pull the carpet -

MR. BAIRD: You are the one who gets caught with your hand in the cookie jar.

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for protecting me - and pull the carpet out from under the minister's feet as he has done so often in the past on so many different occasions, Mr. Speaker. Now he has got a great excuse. When we get up in this House and we question ministers on appointments, the Premier will be able to say, 'Well, I did not know about that'.

I have to repeat again, Mr. Speaker, what I said on a previous bill, that the only real protection that the people have is around the Cabinet Table, at least collectively there might be somebody in the group who may have a little common sense but if you delegate this authority to ministers who are completely

MR. NEARY: incompetent and bigoted and biased, Mr. Speaker, then you are going to see the lowest kind of politics played in this Province. And having said that, Mr. Speaker, I hope the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) will chew on that for the weekend. I would like to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Let it be noted that the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) has adjourned the debate.

The hon. President of the Council.

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

MR. NEARY: What is coming up on Monday?

MR. MARSHALL: Well, Mr. Speaker, may I tell the hon. gentleman the order of business? He says I do not talk to him and I want to prove that I do talk to him. I talk to him everywhere including in the House.

What we will have on Monday, we will finish this very important bill, extremely important bill. That might take us all day on Monday. Then we will get into the Retail Sales Tax, Order 29. We will be then getting into the Brinco Act, Order 31, finish the debate on the Ferries Act. That will be a good one. Then the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Power) will have the Crown Lands Act. Then the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) will have with Respect To Award Of Interest on Judgements of the Courts. Then we will go on, Mr. Speaker, and we will amend the Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission Act. We will amend the Social Assistance Act. We will amend the Newfoundland

MR. MARSHALL: Medicare Insurance Act. And finally we will bring on, last but not least, the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) to introduce the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act. I could not think of a more appropriate act to end this session on that the Wilderness Act, Mr. Speaker.

So, having given the hon. gentleman all the information I move the adjournment, Mr. Speaker.

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