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PRELIMINARY  
UNEDITED  
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
FOR THE PERIOD  
3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.  
MONDAY, MAY 30, 1983

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for the

Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS:

Mr. Speaker, we have not had

an opportunity to hear very much from the Minister of Health (Mr. House) recently about the situation in our hospitals as a result of the cutbacks which are going to have to be imposed as a result of the government's failure to provide them with enough money to enable them to continue to operate at the levels they had hitherto reached. So I have got one or two questions.

MR. CARTER:

Ask sensible questions, now!

MR. ROBERTS:

Whether my friend for St.

John's North (Mr. Carter) thinks they are sensible or not is another story. Beauty lies in the eye of the beholder - if only sense lay in his mind.

Mr. Speaker, let me ask

the Minister of Health - I cannot ask the member for St. John's North because he is not in the Cabinet, and little chance of it ever again, no matter which side is in - let me ask the Minister of Health if he would be so kind as to tell us whether he has succeeded in arranging a staggering of the hospital bed closures which we are going to experience here in St. John's during the Summer months?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. HOUSE:

Mr. Speaker, some time ago,

of course, just after the Budget was presented, the hospitals felt that they did not have enough. They were given a 12 per cent increase over last year, but they were looking for a considerable amount more, as a matter of fact a 24 per cent increase. We could only give the kind of funding we have in relation to what

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MR. HOUSE:

our income was and we gave a 12 per cent increase. At the time they said to us let us have the amount of money early enough in the year so that we can put our programmes in place and try to stagger the closures, if we have to have any, over a period of time.

This, of course,

MR. HOUSE:

was not only in relation to the hospitals in St. John's, but also in relation to hospitals all across the Province. What has happened in that period of time is, of course, the hospitals have been working on their budgets, they did get together here in the city and, of course pretty well all of the downtime or the closures will be staggered over a three month period beginning in June through to September. The extent of that will be made known by the boards as these cutbacks take place. We ask that they look at spreading it over the year and they felt that, because of the general patterns of hospital operations throughout the years, summertime has been slow-down time because it is a time when doctors usually take their vacations, it is a time also when the staff like to take their vacations, and it is time when people do not want to have elective surgery done. So all of that combined indicates that the best time to close down the hospitals would be in that three month period.

MR. ROBERTS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, simply because in all the baffle-gab there was no hard information. Let me then ask the Minister of Health (Mr. House) if he will tell us the greatest number of beds that will be closed at one point during the Summer in the four hospitals here in St. John's, which not only are the basic acute care centres for the St. John's catchment area, Mr. Speaker, an area which extends on the entire Avalon Peninsula, excluding only the areas served by the Carbonar Hospital, but also, of course, these hospitals serve as the basic referral centres for the entire Province. I believe the jargon word in the trade is tertiary treatment centres.

MR. ROBERTS: Could he tell us, please, how many beds are going to be closed at maximum during the Summer period?

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I do not have all the details. I might just point out that we deem the Health Sciences Complex as the main crisis centre of the Province and for the adult hospitals it is deemed to be the tertiary care hospital and the Janeway, of course is the tertiary care centre for children. At the peak time, which would be August month as far as I can gather, in the vicinity of around 160 beds in the three adult hospitals will be closed.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, will the minister confirm that in the month of August - take his month - there will be fifty-eight beds closed at the Grace, there will be 69 beds closed at St. Clare's and there will be forty-four beds closed at the Janeway and between thirty and forty beds closed at the General? And if he confirms that, as he will have to because the figures, I suggest, are accurate, then would he tell us how 215 beds out of 1,400 - let him tell us first how 215 beds squares with his 150 because the total I have just read is about 215.

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I did mention, when I made my statement, specifically the three adult hospitals, I said in the vicinity of 160 beds. I did not mention the Janeway. I do not have the figures for all of them right here with me now.

MR. ROBERTS: I gave you the figures for all of them, 'Wallace'. Those are the figures.

MR. HOUSE: Well, if you gave them to me, you gave them to me -

MR. ROBERTS: That is right.

MR. HOUSE: - but I said that I do not have them before me. I said roughly 160 beds in the adult hospitals here in the city, so that is pretty close to your figures.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to argue with the minister here, others will do that at other times. Can the minister, then, accepting that

MR. ROBERTS: of the four basic hospitals there will be 215 beds closed at peak out of approximately 1,400 beds, which is 15 per cent of the beds, in rough arithmetic about one-seventh, can he tell us whether in his opinion, as the Health minister, the health services will be able to function adequately here in St. John's doing without 15 per cent of the beds for, in some cases, periods up to three or four months?

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, from what I am getting and the general information I have, that particular figure that the hon. member mentioned, and it was around the vicinity of what I have been talking about, is for August month and that is the peak month. The other two months will be lower than that particular amount according to the information I have in the department.

MR. ROBERTS: No, that is not -

MR. HOUSE: I do not have it specifically because I do not have right before me the exact number of beds.

Now, 15 per cent of the beds, the

MR. HOUSE: question is do I think it is going to be adequate to take care of all of the services that are necessary. Mr. Speaker, up until a couple of years ago, every year just around about this time we pretty well had the same kind of downtime as a result of our inability to recruit people. The only difference this year is the fact that we have downtime because their budgets are not sufficient to keeping the beds open throughout the year.

I am not able to say that services will be adequate during the peak period. I have been advised by the hospitals themselves they they will certainly take care of the emergent care, the emergencies, and they say there could be some problems. I acknowledge that possibility there might be some problems, but we have put in place a monitoring committee that will keep us advised from time to time, will advise me from time to time if there is any negative impact on quality and I will await that, I am going to depend on that advice, Mr. Speaker, and I am hopeful that there will be no negative impact.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: I do not know whether it is a supplementary or a new question. I submit it does not matter, if it is acceptable to Your Honour, because I think my colleagues are letting me have first run at the Question Period today. It is one of the few pleasures of there only being eight sitting on Your Honour's right here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to come back to the minister again, let me ask him if he would care to confirm or deny - because I cannot give him information



MR. ROBERTS: as a preamble to a question, I have to go about it this way- would he confirm or deny that forty-four of the 221 beds at the Janeway will be closed for a four month period, that fifty-eight of the 317 beds at the Grace will be closed for the period between May 20 and and September 6, and that sixty-nine of the 325 at St. Clare's will be closed from June 1 to August 31? We noted in each case, Mr. Speaker, all of these beds will be closed for at least three months and that at the General there will be between thirty and forty bed at minimum closed during the Summer. If he can confirm that or deny it, that would be phase one. Assuming he confirms it, because I assure him that I am told on good authority these are the correct figures, then would he square that with his statement that we will only have this 15 per cent closure for one month? If fact, I suggest to him, Mr. Speaker, that 15 per cent of the beds in these four hospitals will be closed for at least three months.

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, generally the answer I gave before is correct, that the peak month for closures will be August, That is the information that I have got.

MR. ROBERTS: The information is wrong then.

MR. HOUSE: Well,that is the information that I have got.

MR. ROBERTS: Okay, I accept that,but it is wrong.

MR. HOUSE: If the hon. member has better information he can put it on the table. I can get the information that I have got and the information came to us no more than a week ago.

MR. ROBERTS: Mine game today.

MR. HOUSE: Well,there may have been a change over a week. But the point is 160 beds, the peak month is August. I was trying to figure out the numbers you were adding up, but you were mentioning 69 at one.

MR. ROBERTS: They will all be closed for three months.

MR. HOUSE: So, Mr. Speaker, the peak month is August. The Janeway is for three months, whatever they are doing is a three month period, and you mentioned that there are 44 beds there,I think.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, 44 out of 220.

MR. HOUSE: I have confirmed it is in the vicinity of that amount.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Your Honour. I am not here to debate with the minister but I will say to him that my information came as of today.

DR. COLLINS: It came from where?

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MR. ROBERTS:

it came from the hospitals.

MR. HOUSE:

Can you name the people?

MR. ROBERTS:

I will give the minister the names

privately, outside the House, yes. And it came perfectly  
aboveboard. We are not doing what some may think -

DR. COLLINS:

What about its accuracy?

MR. ROBERTS:

It came from the administrators,  
or from the assistant administrators, that level of people within  
the hospitals. And just for the benefit of the minister, 44 of  
the 221 at the Janeway for four months -

MR. HOUSE:

Three months.

MR. ROBERTS:

Four months. The General, 30 to 40 beds  
on a floating level; the Grace, 58 beds closed from May 20 to  
September 6, which is more than three months; and St. Clare's,  
69 beds from June 1 to August 31, which is of course three months.

DR. COLLINS:

Are you absolutely certain of these

figures?

MR. ROBERTS:

I am passing

MR. ROBERTS:

on the information I am given. Unlike the minister, I am certain of them, yes. I am as certain as the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) is of his Budget figures and I will bet my predictions are going to be better than his are on the record.

DR. COLLINS: My predictions are based on the projections, so are your figures projections?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, mine are based on the information which I have. Now they have to be projections because, of course, we are talking of the future, the minister may not have understood the difference between being projective and retrospective.

I will give him outside of the House the names of the people who supplied this information, I have no problem with that at all. Of course, it did not come in any confidential way; in fact, it should be as public as possible. At least 215 beds are going to be closed for at least three months.

MR. NEARY: He is just trying to throw you off the track.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, it will take better than the Minister of Finance to throw me off the track. Mr. Speaker, let me come back to the Minister of Health again. He obviously had no success with his efforts to have the hospitals stagger their closures because they are all closing them for at least three months. Can he tell us, please, whether the hospitals have concurred with his view - I am not talking about what his officials say; I think I know what they say, but that is another matter - have the hospitals concurred with the minister's view that the closure of this number of beds for this period of time will not seriously affect the level of services offered to people both in this city and in the Province? Because again, as the

MR. ROBERTS: minister would confirm, these beds affect the whole Province, not just the St. John's hospital catchment area.

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, when we get down to the number of beds from month to month, the statistics I have, of course, were recent statistics that were garnered, and, as I said, I do not have them exactly right here before me, but I do know that the peak month was August and that was in the vicinity of 160-odd beds, and 44 at the Janeway. I am quite clear on that particular one.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think somewhere along the line there has been some kind of statements being made that I have downplayed the fact that this is going to have an impact on health care. I have kept on stating from day one that we do not know if this is going to have an impact on health care. We are of the opinion that it is not unlike what had happened in previous years. I can tell the hon. member

MR. HOUSE:

and the people in these various hospitals that two years ago there was a lot more down time and closures as a result of a shortage of nurses than we have now. But the point of the matter is I am saying, yes, we may have some problems, I do not know. Nobody can tell me we will or we will not, but they advised me that they are going to be able to take care of emergencies, of emergent problems and they say that they are a little afraid that there may be some impact on quality. Well, what I have asked them to do, or what we have put in place there is a monitoring committee made up of the Hospital Association, the Medical Association and the Department of Health to advise us if there is any negative impact and we will be looking at each case as we are advised.

I met with a number of the hospitals, not only here, I met with board chairmen in various other parts of the Province, and they cannot say, Well, it is going to be terrible. They are saying it is going to be tight and I said, 'Well, we will try to deal with the matters as they arise.'

MR. ROBERTS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Could the minister tell the House - and it should be noted that he did not say specifically whether or not the hospitals had concurred in his view; I take it from his answer that the hospitals have not concurred in his view - but can the minister tell us whether the monitoring committee of which he speaks has made any report to him to express their concern with respect to the proposal to close at least 15 per cent of the beds

MR. ROBERTS: in the St. John's basic hospitals for at least three months?

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, the beds have not been closed as yet. There has been some concern expressed by a spokesman for the Medical Association.

MR. NEARY: It is the monitoring committee we want to know about.

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I will get around to it. I chose my way of answering.

The monitoring committee have been meeting, they have met a couple of times. They have not met to discuss any of the specific problems because none of the hospitals have taken any of the actions yet that they have notified us they will be taking. All they have met to discuss in the pattern that they will follow, so they have not specifically come to me yet. They have met with some of my officials who are members of the committee to set their modus operandi, how they will operate when the bed closures go into effect and the cuts and the layoffs. So specifically, they have not made any recommendations as yet.

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

MR. ROBERTS:

Thank you, Sir.

That, of course, is just another way of saying, Mr. Speaker, that after the damage is done the government will try to correct it. Now, let me ask the minister whether he has caused to be made or whether to his knowledge there has been made a study to show the effect upon the medically needy people - and I use 'medically needy,' that is not a financial measure it, is a measure of medical need - upon the medically needy people in this Province of these closures? And I am only talking about St. John's. Another day we will get on to what this policy is going to do outside St. John's, but let us talk of the St. John's hospitals because they are the base hospitals for the entire Province. Has there been a study made? Has the minister caused one to be made? In other words, does he know, and, if so, how does he know that these hospitals can carry these cuts into effect, 15 per cent for at least three months, without serious damage being caused to the health of people who need hospital care?

MR. HOUSE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. HOUSE:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is asking me if we have done a survey of the people in the Province who have medical needs, the answer is no. I think that would be a major study we would have to be put in place here. The only study we have put in place is a royal commission to look into the costs of operating hospitals and, of course, they are getting underway to carry out their duties now and hopefully they will have that available to us by February of 1984. Each of the hospitals, Mr. Speaker, does have some knowledge of waiting lists, they upgrade these and update them from year to year. I have not heard any hard and



MR. HOUSE: fast figures of late, the last one I did hear was one from the Health Sciences and there was something like 700 or 800 at that time who were on waiting lists for various things, but I guess that improved from about a couple of thousand two or three years ago. So it is very difficult to answer that question, if we have assessed the medical needs, because waiting lists are not very accurate predictors of what the needs are because, in a lot of the cases of waiting lists, when you go to call on the people who are on waiting lists they do not need the procedure or they do not respond to the call. So, no, Mr. Speaker, we depend on the hospitals to have that information. These boards are the ones who are operating and they know the numbers of people who are on waiting lists.

MR. ROBERTS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):  
Strait of Belle Isle.

The hon. the member for the

MR. ROBERTS:

Thank you, Sir.

Of course, the minister is saying he does not know, and then he is saying that the hospitals have made these cuts but of course he would have to

MR. ROBERTS: go on to admit that the hospitals are making the cuts only because the minister has told them they must make cuts. It is like a man being told he is going to lose both legs and an arm bargaining only to lose one hand instead. That is really what has been happening. Can the minister tell us what the occupancy rate is for these four hospitals in St. John's over a twelve month period?

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I do not have that information, but the occupancy rate in these hospitals are reasonably high, I guess up to about 85 per cent occupancy. I do not want to be held to that particular percentage because it may vary one or two percentage points either way. Yes, it is reasonably high in these hospitals. But again, Mr. Speaker, of course, last year there was downtime, the year before last there was downtime so perhaps it is not quite so much in these previous years as this year. But one of the things about it this year, it is better organized, the downtime.

MR. ROBERTS: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, of course, it is better organized, it a desperation measure. Can the minister tell us whether there has ever been downtime on this scale, and, if so, could he explain, Mr. Speaker, if he would be so kind, how it is that a hospital which has been given 12 per cent less than it says it needs to operate on the same level as last year, a figure which took into account any downtime there may have been last year, can now in his opinion, for whatever it may be worth, carry on with significantly less money and yet still have some more downtime? I mean, that is just sheer nonsense. The minister cannot really

MR. ROBERTS: believe it, I have too much credit for his intelligence. Can the minister tell us, Mr. Speaker, when the monitoring committee comes into him and tells him, as it will, as it must, that the hospitals are suffering, that medically needy people are not getting treatment because of this, that extra money will be made available to them to enable them to resume operations at a normal level?

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member keeps talking about cutbacks, I just want to point out, to keep the record straight that there was an increase of 12 per cent. There was an increase of \$10,000 per bed in the hospitals last year, that is what the figure works out to, over the previous year. Now, Mr. Speaker, when we said earlier in the year that the EPF cutbacks had been way higher than we had anticipated, the Opposition, and I believe the hon. member himself, said you could not be cut back from what you had, something like that, that you got 8 per cent more than you had. That is exactly what we got, 8 per cent more than we got last year, and the hospitals wanted - I do not think they needed it - 24 per cent more than last year. We gave 12, and if we had kept abreast with the federal government they would have had \$6 million less, or thereabout. So, you know, when you are saying there are cutbacks, let us say what is cut back. We have not cut back, we have given a 12 per cent increase but it was not what they wanted. And I said, "We wanted 20 per cent from the federal government, too", and you said, "Well, you cannot be cut back from what you did not have."

So, Mr. Speaker, I think, you know, with the way the economy was last year and the loss of \$25 million, or thereabouts from the EPF programmes, we would have had, had they kept their side of the bargain, because our programmes, Mr. Speaker, were predicated on EPF programmes a few years ago, and they have been cut back. So let us keep the record straight, it was a 12 per cent increase.

MR. HOUSE: Now, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the monitoring committee, I am not going to say what is going to happen. When the monitoring committee starts reporting to one we will deal with the matter as they report.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Your Honour, That, of course, is locking the barn door after the horse has been stolen, to mix the metaphore. Mr. Speaker, would the minister confirm the government's position is that the hospitals did not need a 24 per cent increase to enable them to continue to offer services at the same level this year as they did last year, and, assuming he confirms that, because he just said that was the case, could he tell us what level of increase the hospitals needed this year to enable them to continue to carry on? You know, the minister, Mr. Speaker, it must be said, is in the position of a gentleman who killed his parents and then sought mercy from the court on the grounds he was an orphan. The hospitals are getting more money

MR. ROBERTS:

than last year, true, but they are not getting enough to enable them to continue to offer services at the same level. Can the minister put some numbers of it instead of the bafflegab which he is trying to take refuge in?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. HOUSE:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member

perhaps bafflegab is the best he can understand, he is so used to it. I said I doubt if the hospitals needed a 24 per cent increase. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, that would have been somewhere in the vicinity of \$67 million over last year. As a matter of fact, I believe one of the spokesmen for the Hospital Association has been saying they could have carried on the same level of services within the vicinity of \$12 million, which is considerably less than an extra \$34 million. Taking that as the particular figure, it would look to me as if we are funding them between 96 or 97 per cent of the total that they think they can get by with.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for the

Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS:

Is the minister saying - I

want to be sure, because this is an astounding revelation - is the minister saying that the amount of money which the government has made available this year to operate the hospitals - which, I agree with him, is more in dollars than last year; it is more absolutely and less relatively, if the minister can understand those concepts - is he saying that the amount of money made available to the hospitals is sufficient to enable them to continue to operate at the same level as last year? If so, why are we going to have 15 per cent of the beds closed in the base hospitals of the Province for a period of three months?

MR. WARREN:

He cannot explain that.

MR. TULK:

Explain that now!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):  
Health.

The hon. Minister of

MR. HOUSE:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if anybody else understood that; that is what I said. I have said that the hospitals said they wanted 24 per cent over last year's amount to operate.

MR. ROBERTS:

And then you said 12 per cent is enough.

MR. HOUSE:

Wait now! We looked at the situation and we looked at the income we had and said 12 per cent seemed to be reasonable. Now, in doing their assessment, they

MR. HOUSE:

have come back now, and it was a spokesman of their a couple of days ago who said if they had had an extra \$12 million, I believe that was the figure, that they could have gotten along without any bed closures. That is what came through to me, and that is considerably below the \$34 million extra they were looking for.

MR. ROBERTS: So is it \$12 million in addition to what they got or \$12 million in addition to last year?

MR. HOUSE: Yes, in addition to what they got, which is about 4 per cent more than they got. They would want about 4 per cent more than they got to be able to operate fully, I suppose.

MR. ROBERTS: I give up.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I hate to change the subject but my colleague has given up, he is not getting any straight, honest answers from the hon. gentleman.

I would like to direct a question to the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) who, the other day in replying to a question from the member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) - then the next day, I believe it was - he came in and accused the member of exaggerating the shortage of fuel in Labrador South, in St. Lewis. Now could the hon. gentleman tell us, if he could, if he has had time to check into that situation and tell us who he checked with? And if he did check, the hon. gentleman would find out that they have not had any fuel down there, Mr. Speaker, since November of last year; they had to go to Mary's Harbour for their fuel. Now could the hon. gentleman tell us in view of this information if he will apologize to my colleague, the member for Eagle River, and the people of St. Lewis for accusing them of exaggerating the situation down there?



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MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) gave up after a series of question, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) should have given up before he asked his initial one.

Mr. Speaker, you know, we receive the information from our staff on location in Labrador, our resident staff.

MR. MARSHALL: The point I was making, Mr. Speaker, which was verified by the information that we received, was that the hon. member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) had been exaggerating the situation. There had been difficulties in certain communities with respect to the supply of fuel, but these difficulties had been able to be overcome. The hon. member there opposite said that they were able to get the fuel from another community. But the point I was making was the picture that the hon. gentleman was painting at the time, as reference to Hansard will show, was one of complete and dire emergency and urgency at the time, but it was not as the hon. gentleman depicted it. There was a problem in one or two communities but they had been -

MR. NEARY: Now they have to go to Cartwright for their fuel.

MR. MARSHALL: Well, I mean, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentlemen do not want answers,

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

Before we continue with other business, I would like to welcome to the galleries today the federal MP for Gander-Twillingate, Mr. George Baker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: I would also like to welcome to the Speaker's gallery two visitors from the other end of this great country, Mr. and Mrs. Rod Hungerford, who are visiting us from Vancouver.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the answer to Question No. 133, asked by the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) last Friday.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. TULK: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition today on behalf of some 425 residents of Fogo Island and the prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker, reads:

'To the hon. House of Assembly, the petition of the undersigned do humbly and urgently request that the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) take immediate steps to have a new road constructed from Island Harbour on Fogo Island to the new ferry terminal at Man O' War Cove on Fogo Island. The distance involved is only one and a half miles. When the new ferry landing at Man O' War Cove becomes fully operational Island Harbour, Deep Bay, Fogo, Joe Batt's Arm, Tilting and Shoal Bay will all be between fifteen and

MR. TULK:

twenty miles from the new ferry wharf. This puts us on an unfair disadvantage and causes undue hardship especially to residents who do not have their own vehicles and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray." Mr. Speaker, the petition is pretty well self-explanatory, however, I would like to point out in supporting the petition that it arises as a result, this particular petition, as a result of the movement of the ferry terminal from Seldom to Man O' War Cove. Essentially what it does, Mr. Speaker, it makes it eight more miles from every community except the community of Stag Harbour which is really only a mile and a half away from the ferry terminal or a mile, but for the two communities of Island Harbour and Deep Bay they now have to drive some fifteen to twenty miles and that, Mr. Speaker, is over some of the worse dirt roads in this Province. If you look at the geography of the area, if you look at where Island Harbour and Deep Bay are located in relation to the ferry terminal itself, the truth is that those people can see just across the water from them, the boat leaving the terminal on Fogo Island, while at the same time if they want to get there by road or any other way they have to travel some fifteen to twenty miles and, as I said, it is over some of the worse gravel roads in the Province. Mr. Speaker, the people of Island Harbour and Deep Bay have had to, for the last number of years, put up with travelling over, again, the worst dirt roads in the Province, not some of the worst the worst. And, as the Speaker will recall, I have presented petitions on

MR. TULK:                   the conditions of these roads  
many times. Mr. Speaker, the people of Island Harbour  
and Deep Bay like all the rest of the people on Fogo  
Island, are indeed deserving of much better services  
than they are getting. I have stood in this House many  
times and pointed out that the people on Fogo Island  
have really produced new dollars,

MR. TULK: millions of new dollars towards the Newfoundland and the Canadian economy without getting some of the infrastructure that governments put in place to try to get other people to produce new dollars. Mr. Speaker, really the only funds that they have gotten from governments have really come from as a result of the federal government, and, Mr. Speaker, of course, we have the best federal MP in Newfoundland, no doubt about that.

Those people produce more per capita, Mr. Speaker, than do any other group of people in the Province. Mr. Speaker, I would like also to point out that this road -

MR. SIMMS: How many do we have now -

MR. TULK: Could I ask the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) to be quiet. I know he is high in his praise of the member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Baker), and he should be.

Mr. Speaker, the road could be constructed at a minimal cost because of the type of ground the road has to go over.

Mr. Speaker, I want to support the petition and I support it for the reasons that I have just outlined. Because if you look at the productivity of those people, the people of Island Harbour, Deep Bay, Fogo, Joe Batt's Arm, Tilting, Shoal Bay and Seldom, it is obvious that they are deserving of what they are looking for. The degree of need is there and the request for that mile and a half of road is very reasonable.

I would ask the minister, who is not in the House - I notice that the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) has left; I do not know if there is anybody left on the other side to support this

MR. TULK: petition at all, either minister.

But I would ask the ministers to support this petition and I would ask that it be placed upon the table of the House and referred to the department to which it relates.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HICKEY: I do not wish to go into any detail. I am not as familiar with the situation as the hon. gentleman is. In the absence of my colleague, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), I will certainly take the matter up with him and discuss it, and I am sure that if there is anything he can do during the current year, he will.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the Minister of Social Services decided to get into the debate.

MR. HICKEY: Acting Minister of Transportation.

MR. NEARY: Oh, acting minister.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY: I will just have to educate the hon. gentleman. He has been out of Cabinet so long, I suppose he forgets the system. There are such things as acting ministers when other ministers are out of the House.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has been acting for a long time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the prayer of this petition so ably presented by

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MR. NEARY:

my colleague, the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk).

I do not think the fact that the federal member is in the public galleries today was prearranged, I think it is merely a coincidence, but I am glad he is there, Mr. Speaker, because between the two of them,



MR. NEARY: I think they will manage to persuade the administration of the need for this mile and a half stretch of road. I am not all that familiar with the area myself, but Mr. Speaker, having been born and raised on an island I sympathize with the people in Island Harbour and in Deep Bay. Mr. Speaker, the ferry service is a matter of life and death to the people on Fogo Island, and to the people who live on other islands in this Province. They are not asking for all that much, Mr. Speaker, they are only asking for a mile and a half of road. I think they are entitled to that in this day and age. As my colleague so rightly pointed out, the people of Fogo Island generate new dollars, Mr. Speaker, if there was ever a model community in this Province that pulled itself up by its boot straps it is Fogo Island. And I think the administration should go out of their way to do everything possible to help the people of Fogo Island. The Co-Op down there is a model and an example that could be followed and adopted anywhere in North America.

MR. TULK: It is being used now.

MR. NEARY: What is being used?

MR. TULK: The model.

MR. NEARY: The model is being used. My hon. colleague says the model is being used, and rightly so. Because, Mr. Speaker, it is a real success story. These people down there are primary producers, they are producing new dollars, new revenue for the public coffers, and Mr. Speaker, they are entitled to better treatment than they are getting. Up to now, as far as road improvements are concerned, they have been discriminated against by this administration. In eleven years of Toryism - Can my colleague, the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) tell me, in eleven years of Toryism, how many roads have been upgraded and paved on Fogo Island?

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NM - 2

MR. TULK:

Not very many.

MR. NEARY:

Not very many. How many miles?

MR. MORGAN:

A lot more than in the twenty-odd years of Liberalism.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is not familiar with the history of the Province, so the hon. gentleman had better stick to telling jokes. Because he is certainly not familiar with -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The Chair is having some difficulty in listening to the comments of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) while other hon. members are interrupting. The Chair also feels that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is straying somewhat from the prayer of this petition.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to belabour the matter. I just want to say that we on this side of the House are right behind our colleague and the member of Parliament for Gander/Twillingate (Mr. Baker), in trying to get something done with this stretch of road. They are going to move the ferry terminal to Man O' War Cove which is a mile and a half away, and it is going to make it very difficult for people who can sit down in their look out and see the ferry coming and going and yet they have to drive fifteen or sixteen -

MR. TULK: Twenty miles.

MR. NEARY: Twenty miles to get to Man O' War Cove. That is not good enough, Mr. Speaker. If we can spend a half a million dollars on a Sir Humphrey Gilbert bash, there is no reason why that they could not spend a few dollars on that mile and a half of road.

MR. SIMMS: The feds are giving us a half million, too.

MR. NEARY: Give us what?

MR. SIMMS: The feds are giving us a half million, too.

MR. NEARY: The feds are giving you a half million. Well,

MR. SIMMS: They supported it, the Daily News supported it. Everybody is supporting it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we will debate that matter at some other time. But we support the petition and we hope that the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey) who spoke for the administration was sincere, that he will be

MR. NEARY: able to see to it, persuade his colleagues to allocate the money that is necessary in this fiscal year to have that piece of road constructed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs to introduce a bill "An Act To Amend The City Of St. John's(Loan)Act, 1978, " carried. (Bill No. 60).

On motion, Bill No. 60 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Establish An Economic Council For The Province," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper (Bill No. 1).

On motion, A bill, "An Act To Amend The Pharmaceutical Association Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper (Bill No. 9).

On motion , A bill "An Act To Amend The Co-Operative Societies Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper (Bill No. 24).

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Pippy Park Commission Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill No. 30).

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Provide For The Portability Of Pensionable Service Between Certain Pension Plans Guaranteed By The Province", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill No. 39).

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting An Increase Of Certain Pensions", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill No. 35).

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting An Increase Of Certain Pensions For Transferred Employees", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill No. 36).

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Uniformed Services Pensions Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill No. 41).

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 38, Bill No. 47.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act, 1973". (Bill No. 47).

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, this bill is in the name of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) who, I believe, is conferring with the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) behind the curtain so I will do a preliminary introduction.

The purpose of this bill is the same as the explanatory note. It is to enable the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation to borrow money - now the Minister of Finance is back and with leave of the House, so that we do

MR. MARSHALL: not have to introduce the bill in unison, perhaps the minister can pick it up at the second sentence of the explanatory note.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Does the hon. minister have leave to introduce the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Leave granted.

The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my thanks to the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) for so ably starting the ball rolling. I have almost nothing to do now as a result of that.

As my colleague mentioned, what this bill will do will be put beyond any doubt that the Liquor Corporation has the authority to borrow. It was always understood that they had and, indeed, they had legal opinion themselves that they had, but there was some question raised about it by other legal opinion related

DR. COLLINS: to the lender and to overcome any possible doubt there this amendment is brought in.

I might just point out, Mr. Speaker, that the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation was created in 1973 and one of its main objectives, if not its main objective, is to provide the most efficient means of distributing alcoholic beverages to the public of this Province. And at the present time the Corporation operates 40 retail liquor outlets and approximately the same number of agency operations. Now, of these the Corporation itself owns 10 stores and the plan of the Corporation now is to fund any further capital works out of borrowings. In other words, they will take a long-term approach to funding their capital works as opposed to what they have done up to now, which was actually fund them out of their current revenues.

Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. members of the House will understand that it is most unusual to do that. All Crown Corporations essentially borrow for their capital programmes and this is what the Liquor Corporation is planning to do at the present time. Now the bill will just confirm that they can borrow long-term and short-term, that they can issue bonds. The aggregate of the amount of loans is set by the Cabinet and in the current year that aggregate amount is set at \$2 million, and the debentures will be guaranteed by the Province and that is the essential aspect that the lenders want to be absolutely sure on, that there is no doubt about it that the Province stands behind these debentures that the corporation will issue.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):  
Strait of Belle Isle.

The hon. member for the

MR. ROBERTS:

Mr. Speaker, we on this side have no particular quarrel with what the minister attempts to do but I do feel before we vote there are one or two questions which he ought to answer and which he has not answered in his remarks introducing the bill.

The Liquor Corporation, of course, in many ways is a financier's dream. It has a product that is in steady demand whether we like it or not, whether we like the product or like the demand or not, it is in steady demand. Unlike the gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. Carter) who is in no demand at all, anywhere, at any time, the Liquor Corporation sells a product that is in steady demand and I would assume, I do not have the numbers in front of me, but I would venture to say I am on



MR. ROBERTS:

safe ground when I say is an increasing demand, I realize that Your Honour, being a lifetime member of the WCTU and a number of other allied organizations, would not understand that, other than in an academic way. I am quite sure that Your Honour would understand it in an academic way but I assure Your Honour that there are many of Your Honour's fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who feel that the products sold by the NLC are products which they desire to purchase.

MR. CARTER:

Who owns the liquor stores?

The ones the former Premier created.

MR. ROBERTS:

I have no idea. I wish I owned one or two of them. Heaven knows over the years I have put enough into them that I feel I do own one of them.

MR. NEARY:

The demand gets greater in troubled Tory times.

MR. ROBERTS:

My friend for LaPoile brings the matter to a point by saying in troubled Tory times people take to drink.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me carry on, not only has it got a product that is in demand it has a monopoly. If you wish to buy liquor lawfully in this Province today other than by the drink or by the glass or by the strawfull or whatever is sold, you must buy it from the NLC stores, either their own stores or their agencies or the brewers retail I suppose. But in a sense the brewers retail in that regard are agents of the NLC as well. In fact, they are called brewers agents. They are not agents of the breweries, they are agents of the NLC at law. So the result of those two happy facts that any merchandiser would give his left arm and his right leg for -

MR. ROBERTS: oh, I am sorry I forgot the other thing, the NLC has no credit. You do not give in your Visa Card or your MasterCard or write a cheque or say put it on account, it is cash on the barrel head. Cash, filthy cash, lucre, specie, coin of the realm, nothing but cash. So as a result of those three factors, a product that is much in demand, a monopoly on its sale and the lack of credit, the NLC has a cash flow that can only be the envy of any business person in this Province or, I suggest, even the Department of Finance. And, of course, we know how much the Department of Finance think of that, they think of it very highly because whenever they are short of cash the very first place they go is they invite the NLC to make a greater contribution towards the net revenues of this Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, because the NLC has such a very tremendous cash flow it is hard to conceive how it could have any need for borrowing at all except, and I will grant the exception and come back to deal with it, except in the case of long-term capital commitment.

MR. CARTER: Invite the member to see for himself.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my friend from St. John's North (Mr. Carter) I was telling him - we were in the elevator and Your Honour may not believe this but I assure you it is true that my hon. friend from St. John's North and I outside the House get cozy from time to time, Not quite mind to mind and belly to belly, in the words of the soon to be ex-leadership candidate,

MR. ROBERTS: but as gentleman or those, in his case and in my case, who consider themselves gentleman ought to behave. Now I was saying to him today in the elevator that we were rising in the world, It is the one way that my hon. friend opposite can ever get to rise in the world, we were rising up in the elevator and I said to him, ' You know, the last time you interrupted me in the House, when I was making a few remarks on the execrable state of the roads in my district, I sent the Hansard down to the editor of the Northern Pen, the newspaper in St. Anthony, and he ran a story on my remarks, then a couple of weeks later he wrote an editorial in which he extracted some of the comments which I had made about the hon. gentleman and suggested that given my wit I was obviously emulating John Crosbie and going on to greater things, or attempting to go on to greater things. I said that that amused me and that I had never thought of my friend from St. John's North (Mr. Carter) as playing the role of John the Baptist, namely, as the one who goes before, setting up the straight man. All I would say to him in his John the Baptist role is that he should be very careful if the Premier invites him to a dance some evening because he may find defeatures in it.

Now, let me come back to the cash flows of the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation which, after all, is what we are talking about here. There is no conceivable reason I suggest, and the minister has not given us one, why the Corporation needs to borrow on its current account. I do not know what its terms are with its suppliers, whether it pays cash on delivery for its product and buys it from the wholesalers or the manufacturers, whoever it buys it from, or whether it has credit terms thirty, sixty, ninety days, it does not matter. The fact remains that all of its sales are in cash and its sales are a very large and an assured

MR. ROBERTS: amount. So there is no conceivable reason why it would need any credit at all at the bank, even for its payrolls. You know, it is awash in cash in there. Unless the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) is milking the corporation in an effort to try to get some money to bolster the fortunes of the budget as a whole. That may well be it.

MR. NEARY: You hit the nail on the head.

MR. ROBERTS: And my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) will be able to expand upon this. Mr. Speaker, let me also go on to say that the minister has spoken of borrowing on capital account and this is one of the things the bill does. Now, if that is all he wants the Corporation authorized to borrow, then I would say to him if he will undertake to amend the bill we will support it without further ado. The problem, of course, Mr. Speaker, is that the bill as it now stands authorizes the NLC to borrow on capital or current account. That is made quite clear by the new section 19.1 (1) (a) which reads, "the Corporation may borrow money for any of its purposes, including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, capital financing;"

MR. ROBERTS: In other words, if this bill is rammed through this House by this administration in the dying days of this moribund session, the NLC will be able to go out and borrow for any purpose. If it is simply for capital account, then let the minister say so and let him amend the bill accordingly, or let him ask one of his colleagues to amend it in committee and there will be no further ado. Because we will authorize gladly the corporation to borrow for capital account.

Now mind you, the minister has not told us why the corporation has a capital account. Are they building new facilities? Are they buying facilities? I do not know. But if they are, let him say so.

The other point I would draw Your Honour's attention to, Mr. Speaker, is Section 19.8; 19.8 is one of these sections that sneaks in almost unnoticed near the end of the bill. The draftsmen just get ecstatic at the thought of a section like 19.8. In its entirety, it says, 'Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the Financial Administration Act or any other act or law,' - fairly sweeping words - 'Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the Financial Administration Act, 1973 or any other Act or law, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may from time to time advance to the corporation any sum he deems to be necessary or desirable to enable the Corporation to attain any of its objects or to carry on its business, and any such advance may be made in such amount, for such term, at such rate of interest and on such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.'

MR. NEARY: It is pretty sweeping.

MR. ROBERTS: Now, how is that for a grant of power, Your Honour? Here it is, an innocuous little bill,

MR. ROBERTS: and here we are in the last dying days of this moribund session with this moribund administration, with this moribund minister and we get a section saying, 'Notwithstanding any Act or law of the Province.' The Cabinet - the polite word is the Lieutenant-Governor in Council but we all know that, of course, is the Cabinet - the Cabinet may advance any sums or sum that they deem necessary to the corporation on such terms as they deem fit. Now why do we need that, Mr. Speaker? Why do we need it? If we do not need it, why do we put it in? If we do need it, what is the

MR. ROBERTS:

reason? It is not to authorize borrowing by the NLC which is what the explanatory note says, it is not to authorize the Corporation to go out and borrow some money and give debentures to enable it to build a new building or to buy more bottling equipment or whatever it may be doing in the line of capital account expenditures, it simply gives the Cabinet a completely unfettered power to lend money to the NLC on such terms, at such rate of interest, and for such term as the Cabinet may see fit. Now I can only assume that my friend for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) had not noticed that section. I know he is just about indefatigable in his consideration of legislation, but I can only assume he had not seen that because he has stood here in this House, on both sides, over his long and inglorious career as a member of this House and objected to that kind of wording.

MR. NEARY:

That is right.

MR. ROBERTS:

And there it is, 'notwithstanding any act or law of the Province, the Cabinet can lend the Liquor Corporation whatever it wants.' Whatever it wants, for how long it wants, on such terms it wants, and at such rate of interest it wants. Now, how is that for a grant of power?

Mr. Speaker as I said at the outset, if the bill is amended so as simply to achieve that which the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) has said he wants to achieve, namely, to make it certain at law that the NLC may borrow long-term and may issue its debentures to support these loans and to secure them, then we on this side are prepared to support that legislation and to vote in favour of it.

On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, given these two flaws in the bill, the fact that it can be used for far more than capital account financing, and the fact that the government are given a power to advance any unlimited amount of money without any restriction at all to the corporation, I must say, Sir, we on this side having discussed this at great

MR. ROBERTS: lenth in caucus, and agonized over it for several weeks, are really very dubious and we are not at all sure that the minister ought to be encouraged in the kind of wild careening conduct that he appears now to be embarked upon.

Having said that, Sir, I think my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) -

MR. NEARY: No, no. You said it all.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, no, I have said it all.

At least for this thing. I will now sit down and listen to the astute analysis of the gentleman for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) who, on this, as on so many other matters, has opinions backed by knowledge, opinions that are sound, relevant, thoughtful, perceptive, considered and -

MR. TULK: Like the Minister of Health.

MR. ROBERTS: Like the Minister of Health (Mr. House)-are solidly founded on knowledge, on assiduous



MR. ROBERTS: study, on many years of preparation, on an understanding of the law and of the financial structure of the Province and of the way everything works, right from the savoury growing up from the ground into the intricacies of the government's long-range financing, the EPF, the offshore energy situation, and anything else at which the hon. gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. Carter) is so expert.

MR. NEARY: If you sniff enough savoury can you get high on it?

MR. ROBERTS: I would not know. He is well over six feet high, so he may be very high on savoury. But I would say to my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary), I do not know how high the gentleman from St. John's North can go, but over the years we have seen how low he can go and that speaks for itself. So I will conclude by inviting him to engage in this debate on its merits if, in fact, in his eyes the bill has any merits at all.

But a little bit more seriously, Sir, to deal with somebody who counts, namely, the minister as opposed to the gentleman from St. John's North, there are these two questions about the bill and they go directly contrary to the purposes which the minister has told us are to be served by the bill and that being so, why are they in the bill? And if there is no reason to put them in let us take them out, Sir. They are just a grant of power to the executive and it is not needed. Thank you, Sir.

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

The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) indicated that the business of the Corporation is of an expanding nature and its

DR. COLLINS: revenues are increasing. That is quite true. In the revised estimates for '82-'83, the revenue from the Corporation was just over \$60 million. Now granted what we have in the budget for this year is a projection, but our projections in the past, as all our projections, have been in all aspects of our budget making remarkably accurate, and I would expect that what we are projecting, which is \$66 million, will be very near the mark. So it is quite true that the revenues are increasing.

Now, that is not all on the basis of

DR. COLLINS:

increased volume as hon. members of this hon. House are aware, there have been increases in the mark up on alcoholic beverages also.

MR. ROBERTS:

Only too painfully aware of it, I fear.

DR. COLLINS:

I mean, aware from their legislative duties. I am not saying that they are necessarily aware from their purchases, but they may be aware from that point of view, also.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other point that the hon. member brought up was the borrowing on other than capital. Mr. Speaker, the main point here is to ensure that not only does the Corporation have the clear power to borrow but, also, that the borrowings are government guaranteed. What has happened in the past in terms of short-term borrowing, was that the banks would accept that a guarantee would be forthcoming. They would not hold up a loan of short-term nature of the Corporation, and there have been short-term borrowings just for the conduct of their business. That has been necessary from time to time, I do not need to go into details. Almost all businesses do have to have a bit of working capital at some point or other and need to get into some element of short-term borrowing. But the banks have taken it that a guarantee will be forthcoming at a later date. Now that was, shall we say, taken on faith. Now, in terms of long-term borrowing that is a somewhat different aspect of things. When you are borrowing on a fifteen or twenty year term, that type of extent, it is less likely that a lender would take the fact that you could be guaranteed by the Province on faith. They want that as an up-front undertaking, up-front understanding, an up-front power of the Corporation. And that is essentially what this bill is doing. It is giving it the power to borrow but it is also showing that any borrowing that it does

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DR. COLLINS: enter into will be guaranteed.  
Now, it would in actual fact be somewhat anomalous to give  
that in one form of borrowing, i.e., the long term and not  
give it in the short term even though, as I say, in the  
past the banks have

DR. COLLINS:

not actually demanded it but they certainly expect it and fully expect that a guarantee would be forthcoming in short order.

So actually, the bill here is making the whole thing consistent. We are ensuring that the Corporation has a clear ability to borrow short-term, long-term. We are making it quite clear here that the government guarantee will be given for long-term borrowing, will be given for short-term borrowing. So it is just really making the whole act consistent.

And the same thing applies to the comment that the hon. member made with regard to 19.8, that is, the advancement or the possibility that the government may advance moneys to the Corporation on certain terms and so on. That is put into acts where power is given to a Crown corporation to borrow. That is a regular thing. That allows any circumstance that might arise requiring short-term government lending to go ahead without any difficulty. It really gives a certain amount of flexibility and it is not unusual to have it in this type of authority.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those remarks, I move second reading.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act, 1973," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House, presently by leave. (Bill No. 47).

MR. MARSHALL:

Order 42.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Public Service (Pensions) Act," (Bill No. 50).

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, these amendments will clarify and will make consistent certain aspects of our pension system for public servants and it is very closely tied in with the portability act that we gave second reading to, and I believe third reading now, earlier in this sitting.

DR. COLLINS: The first clause, Mr. Speaker, overcomes an inequity, that is in terms of deferred pension benefits, and this will permit a former employee who has not reached the age of forty-five, when he would be normally locked in, who has not reached that age but who has elected to take a deferred pension rather than take his refunds, that he will now be allowed to renege on that election. It allows him to do that. If it is in his own interest to do that, if he made such an election that he would take a deferred pension, you know, it might be 20 years hence or whatever, but now if he finds it in his own best interest, that if he reneged on that and actually got his contributions back, we will allow him to do that.

Mr. Speaker, clause 2 will permit a person who had - that is a necessary point there - who had participated in one of our pension plans and had received a refund on his contributions, and who becomes an employee again, he will be able to get service for his pensionable service provided, of course, he repays back the contributions he was refunded.

And, Mr. Speaker, the third clause there points out that certain non-profit bodies, the employees there, can be covered by the Public Service Pension Plan. The previous wording stated that the non-profit organization had to be owned and controlled by government, and that was very restrictive. The present wording will allow a somewhat broader coverage. It is where a non-profit organization is providing a service which if that non-profit organization was not doing it government would have to do it. In other words, these people are standing in the shoes of government.

MR. NEARY: What falls into this?

DR. COLLINS: Well, you know, say the Public Service Credit Union would be one.

DR. COLLINS: And another might be, say, a nursing home. It might not be owned and controlled by government but it is actually giving a public service and if the public was not given by, say, a church organization or whatever, government would obviously have to go in and provide the service. These individuals are essentially employees of the public service so they come in under the public service pension plan. So, I think that explains the act there, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is about as clear as mud but I think I got the drift of what the hon. gentleman was talking about. I think it is very important that former employees who get a pension refund, Mr. Speaker, if they come back into the public service that they once again be covered under the public service employees pension plan. I think that is only fair and just. We have no objection to this bill, Mr. Speaker, but it does give us an opportunity again to raise the matter that was brought out in the Auditor General's Report for the fiscal year 1981 - 82, when the Auditor General, much to our surprise, drew attention to the fact that the public service employees' pension fund was underfunded, that there was a possibility that down the road a few years it may be virtually impossible for the government to pay out benefits to former employees who go off on retirement, from the public service. It caused quite a stir, I might say, Mr. Speaker, around the Province, quite a stir indeed, especially amongst people already retired. And it seems to be a very serious matter. The Public Accounts Committee raised it recently at one of their meetings and they will probably be developing this matter further when they get back at other meetings. But, Mr. Speaker, I believe the



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MR. NEARY: Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins)  
who shied away from this very serious matter, while we are on this bill and when he is closing the debate on second reading, that the hon. gentleman should give us a sort of state of the pension fund. Is the Auditor General correct in his observations? Will there be problems with the funding, with paying out pensions to people who retire over the years, who have retired, who will retire in the next couple of years? Will there be any problems? What steps are the administration taking to deal with these matters? It is a matter of concern, Mr. Speaker, to an awful lot of people and

MR. NEARY: I believe the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) should make a statement in this House that will reassure people on pension and people who will be going on pension in the next few years, that their cheques will be honoured, that there is no way that we will reach the point in time in this Province when the government will not be able to meet their commitments as far as pension payments are concerned. Now, Mr. Speaker, as I say, we have no real objection to this bill. Whether or not an employee decides to defer his pension, wait until he reaches the age of 45, or whether he elects to withdraw his pension contributions and get a refund, I think he should have that choice. And I believe that is what this bill does, it give the employee a choice where he can leave in his - I remember when I lost my job with DOSCO in 1966-I was going to say when I retired from DOSCO - but when I lost my job with DOSCO in 1966 I withdrew my pension contributions. If I had left it there, maybe at age of 65 I might have got a very small pension of maybe twenty or twenty-five dollars a month but I withdrew, that was my choice. I had a choice to leave it there or withdraw and get a refund on my contributions, and I took the refund. So I think it is only fair that people should have that choice. And, as I say, once you make that decision and you leave the public service and then a year or two, or maybe several years later you come back into the public service, then you should have a right to purchase the service. In other words, if you take a refund and, say, you had ten years service when you withdrew your pension contributions, when you come back in the public service you should have

MR. NEARY: the right to purchase that ten years. And I believe that is what this bill does, it gives former employees the right to purchase their - just the same as you have the right in this House to purchase your years of service. And, so, Mr. Speaker, we have no objection to the bill but I would certainly like to hear a statement from the minister on the section of the Auditor-General's report dealing with questions, dealing with doubts as to whether or not at the present rate of funding we will be able to meet our obligations, whether the administration will be able to continue to pay out pension benefits in the years ahead. I do not expect a full-fledged debate on it now, but I would certainly like to hear the hon. gentleman comment on that item.

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

The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, just on the last point first there about buying back service: In actual fact, those in the teachers' pension plan and those in the uniformed services plan could have bought back before but now all individuals, including MHAs and including people on the MUN plan, will be able to buy back their previous pensionable service if they again become re-employed in the public service. And it makes it equitable; the individuals will buy back at the rate of their new starting salary. The usual contribution rate is 6 per cent by the employee and 6 per cent of salary by government.

On the other point that the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) brought up, Mr. Speaker, about the guarantee that pensions are not in jeopardy, I can give an unequivocal guarantee on that even though it is quite true that we are mounting an actuarial study just to see what our unfunded liability is. And the reason why I can give an unequivocal guarantee, of course, is that there was no such thing as a pension fund up to 1980. The pensions were paid out of the consolidated fund and that was always the mechanism right from the time the public service pension arrangement came into force which, I think, was in 1967. So for that thirteen year period the consolidated fund stood behind the pension obligations. We have now, since 1980, at least partially funded our pension obligation. So we have a two-barrelled approach there now. Not just a one-barrelled approach, a two barrelled approach. And when we have the actuarial study completed, it is quite a task to get such a study done, but when that is completed we will be able to see whether

DR. COLLINS: we should adjust our pension fund, which will improve the arrangement even more so. But I think it should be everyone's understanding that the consolidated fund in any case stands behind the pension obligations of this Province.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker,  
I move second reading.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Public Service (Pensions) Act", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of The Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill No. 50).

Motion, second reading of a bill,  
"An Act To Amend The Petroleum And Natural Gas Act."  
(Bill No. 54).

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that is going to empower the Executive Council to make regulations with respect to the compensation for any damage to the environment and the fishery as a result of the conduct of exploration,

MR. MARSHALL: and it is brought in specifically at this time, Mr. Speaker, with a view to the hoped for activity on the West Coast of this Province. As hon. members are aware, certain acreage on the West Coast of this Province was put out for tender. The tenders close on June 10th and at that particular time - we do not know how much interest there is going to be in the area on June 10th, if there is not, we shall try again sometime in the future because we have to realize that when the tenders were called it came at a time when there was a downturn in the overall international/national economy. But in any event, we want to have - we have done everything we can to foster interest on the West Coast and we want to be sure at the same time, if an appropriate bid comes in that is acceptable, that there are regulations in place to adequately protect the environment and the fishery.

Now, you will note, Mr. Speaker, with respect to this bill, that there are two areas on the West Coast that we will be concerned with, that is those onshore and on the near shore. It has been rather difficult to come up with yardsticks with respect to the formulas that will be used in this -

MR. NEARY: Does it apply to the offshore?

MR. MARSHALL: Yes, it applies to the offshore as well. It becomes rather difficult to bring in a new scheme of this nature, but before so doing, we had resource to the OPIC Committee, the Fishery and Environmental subcommittee of OPIC, which did an excellent job in conducting the research necessary in order to bring this bill to the House. In doing so, it reviewed the practices in the United Kingdom and in the North Sea. And what has been decided, Mr. Speaker, even though you will not find it

MR. MARSHALL: in the body of this bill, the recommendations have been given to the Cabinet. In framing the regulations that will be made under this particular act, certain recommendations have been made which have been adopted. But, of course, in order to make those regulations, one has to have the authority to make them and this is the purpose of this bill, to give the Cabinet power to make the regulations. And for the purpose of the information of hon. members, may I say in general terms what it is contemplated that these regulations will contain.

First of all, because it is new, we are going to view this as a two year pilot project and then review the regulations at the end of that time to see if any adjustments are necessary. And during that period of time, there are two types of damages that can be caused, as hon. members know. The first are the attributable damages and these are damages that can be attributable directly to the company which is involved in the offshore or onshore drilling. In the event that they can be attributed, of course, the person who has been caused damage or the agency that has been caused damage, indeed, the government of the Province if the damage is caused to the government, can take action

MR. MARSHALL: directly against the company itself. So with respect to attributable damages, we are going to require companies operating on the West Coast offshore to be required to supply evidence of financial responsibility up to \$40 million. Now members may ask, how did we come to the \$40 million? How did we come to that? We came to that figure, Mr. Speaker, by reviewing the practices in other jurisdictions. Of course, it is a fairly new scheme anywhere in the world. But we have put the figure at \$40 million, comparing what is the useage in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. So that is attributable damage, damage that can be attributed to a company. Occasionally there would be some kinds of non-attributable damage.

With respect to that, the information that we have recieved is that there should need only be a non-attributable fund for damage to the fisheries. With respect to the environment itself, all damage is usually attributable, or that certainly has been the experience to date. So for the present time, bearing in mind that one has to balance the interest of the fishery as against the desire to get drilling going, particularly on the West Coast, and not to make these regulations too prohibitive so that nobody is going to drill there, we have provided that there should be a fisheries compensation fund and there will be amounts that will have to be paid by the companies who may be drilling into this fund. And that fund will be subject to review yearly to determine the adequacy of the fund itself, and if it is deemed not sufficient there is power of the Executive Council to increase it.

There are also other provisions, Mr. Speaker, the companies, of course, will have to show financial proof of responsibility for their \$40 million or whatever other requirements are necessary. I indicated that there was no evidence that other jurisdictions have found



MR. MARSHALL: it unnecessary to have a non-attributable compensation fund for environmental damage, but that is not to say that environmental damage will not be compensated for, because if it is attributable damage one can go against the negligent actor. Then, Mr. Speaker, as I want to emphasize again, this a pilot project for two years. It is a bill which is representative of the government's deep concern with respect to the new industry that we hope will come to realization in this Province, the development of oil and gas. I think it is probably the first instance of a legislative effort, a direct legislative effort by the Province to balance the new industry, the operations of the new industry with respect, specifically, to the fishing industry itself. And we are proceeding very carefully because in doing this balance, on the one hand you have to be sure that your rules and regulations are not such that they preclude exploration and that they preclude development on the offshore, but at the same time they have to be strict enough to give adequate protection to the fishery and adequate protection to the environment.

What is adequate is going to depend upon the circumstances. Obviously it will have to be reviewed if and when we get into the stage of development and if and when there are experiences of this nature. In the meantime, we have to rest on the experiences of other jurisdictions which the OPIC Committee

MR. MARSHALL: and the government have done, and the consequence is this particular act which will enable us to make strong regulations.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to say that we on this side of the House agree with this bill. We agree with the principle of the bill and we intend to support it. I was rather disappointed to hear the minister sort of apologize for the introduction of the bill and to walk rather gingerly as far as the bill is concerned. The gentleman who introduced the bill for the administration seemed to pick and choose his words. He was very cautious about what he was saying there about this bill, Mr. Speaker, and maybe the hon. gentleman knows something that we do not know and maybe that is why he was treading so lightly as far as this bill is concerned. Because Mr. Speaker, let me say to the hon. gentleman that the question that is being raised here is whether oil and fish can co-exist, whether we can have oil and fish, Mr. Speaker. That is what the bill is really all about. It is a question that has been asked by a good many people in this Province in the last, I would say, fifteen years, well I would say since about 1968 or 1979, when the first oil rig, SEDCO 709 I think it was, arrived in Newfoundland waters and started drilling for oil. From then on people began to ask the question, can the fishery survive where you have the offshore oil and the threat of an oil spill and the threat of a blowout in one of the holes offshore?

It is a big question, Mr. Speaker, and it is only now that the administration are addressing themselves to the question. It is a big question and it is unfortunate that this bill is being introduced in the House in the dying hours of this particular part of the session of the Legislature. It is unfortunate,

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MR. NEARY: because I am sure that a lot of members on a daily basis now are saying, "Will we finish today? Will we finish tomorrow? Will we finish Wednesday? When will the House adjourn?" That is a matter that is on hon. members' minds and it is too bad, Mr. Speaker, that it has to be that way. Because probably the only comments now

MR. NEARY:

that we will get from hon. gentleman there opposite will be from the minister who introduced the bill, and that will be tragic, unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, because what we are talking about here, as I said a few moments ago, we are talking about protection of the fishery and protection of the Newfoundland environment, Mr. Speaker. And no stone, in my opinion, should be left unturned to protect the Newfoundland fishery. The Newfoundland fishery is the most basic industry we have. It is the one industry that has kept Newfoundland afloat now for almost 500 years and, Mr. Speaker, let us face it, there is always that danger with drilling going on onshore, near shore and offshore, there is that danger, Mr. Speaker, that one spill, one blowout could ruin the Newfoundland fishery for years and years to come. Unfortunately, this bill does not deal with measures to offset an oil spill of any magnitude. This bill merely deals with the establishment of a fund, of a committee, the establishment of a board, "The Lieutenant-Governor in Council may establish a board to be known as the Fisheries Compensation Board". So what we are talking about here, Mr. Speaker, is compensation in the event of a major oil spill. We are not dealing with the matter of prevention, of what steps and measures should be taken to prevent an offshore or an onshore or a near shore oil spill, we are merely talking about compensation. And as far as I am concerned, nothing could compensate for the loss of our fishery, for damage to our fishery. Nothing could compensate for that, Mr. Speaker, All the dollars in the world, and you can talk about companies having to give evidence of \$40 million, Mr. Speaker, but nothing, in my opinion, could compensate, there is not enough dollars that could compensate for ruining the Newfoundland fishery. And I hope that it will never happen, but I am very concerned about this matter and have been concerned about it for a good many years and have spoken

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MR. NEARY: in this House on a number of occasions about the possibility of damage being done to the Newfoundland fishery as a result of a blowout in one of these holes, or an oil spill either onshore or offshore, Mr. Speaker,

MR. NEARY: I have pointed out on a number of occasions in this House that there is not adequate protection. There are not enough safeguards and there is no technology available that I know of that can cope or deal with a major spill offshore, a blowout on the Grand Banks, right in the heart of the breeding grounds for cod.

Mr. Speaker, a few years ago they started a programme down here in St. John's Harbour, they recruited a number of members of the Longshoremen's Protective Union, to train them into trying to cope with an oil spill off our coast. A dispute arose, as far as I know, between the people who were sponsoring this programme and the LSPU, and as a result the LSPU withdrew their services. I do not know if they have been reinstated. I do not know if the authorities, the powers that be, were able to accommodate the members of the LSPU who had to give up their time to undergo this training which was very important to the industry and to the fishery and to this Province. These were the only people that I know, apart from the Coast Guard of course, the full-time employees of the Canadian Coast Guard, these were the only people outside of the Coast Guard that I know of that were given any training at all to cope with an oil spill off our coast, whether it be near shore or offshore, and they withdrew their services. I have lost contact with the situation. I had a great deal of discussion with the executive of the LSPU there about two years ago, and I had a great deal of discussion with the Coast Guard over this matter, Mr. Speaker. As I lost contact with the members of the LSPU I do not know to this day whether they have reinstated their services or not. So if they have not, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. gentleman when he is closing the debate in second reading, if he would tell the House what services are available now to deal with an oil spill off our Coast. Are we depending wholly and solely on the services

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MR. NEARY:                    of the Canadian Coast Guard? I believe we are, Mr. Speaker, and I was told about a year ago by a high ranking official of the Canadian Coast Guard that even though they have the latest equipment available, the latest

MR. NEARY:                    technology available, they had it stored then down at Fort Pepperrell, behind a wire fence down there, that even though they had the latest technology available today, this official told me that there was no way that they could cope with a major oil spill off our coast. Even though they had the latest technology available on the face of the earth, there was no way that they could cope with a major oil spill off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is really something! I hope hon. gentlemen will think about that. That is really something for hon. gentlemen to think about, that even though the oil companies and the drilling companies have contributed towards the purchase of the technology, the equipment, and the Coast Guard have taken the responsibility of maintaining and looking after that equipment, that the Coast Guard will readily admit that even with that technology that is supplied by the oil companies, there is no way they can cope with a major oil spill off our shores. And we all know, Mr. Speaker, the hazards of drilling off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador where you are exposed and where the drills and, if we ever get into production, the platforms, will be exposed to the savage storms of the North Atlantic, the roughest weather, I suppose, in the world, where an oil drilling rig or a production platform may have to disconnect at a moment's notice, as a matter of fact, may not have time to disconnect, and we will end up, Mr. Speaker, with an oil spill that cannot be controlled.

Also, Hibernia and some of these oil wells are in what they call iceberg alley, a hazard that they do not have in the North Sea.

We saw this year, Mr. Speaker,



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MR. NEARY: an example of what can happen  
when literally hundreds of icebergs, more than we see  
under normal circumstances moving down from the North

MR. NEARY: and the oil rigs having to be moved off their moorings to let the ice and icebergs go by. Several hundred icebergs right in the area where the drilling is taking place. Is it any wonder they call it iceberg alley, Mr. Speaker?

And then I am told that the oil companies and the drilling companies are now developing a new technology, something I have never heard of before, Mr. Speaker, and this may be of some interest to hon. members there opposite, if they do not already know, that in order to avoid - I mean, it is one thing to move the rigs off the hole or to disconnect a production platform and move it off the well, but when you do that you have to leave, the cap has to be on the floor of the ocean. And we are told that nine-tenths of an iceberg is under water - and they gouge large valleys. As the icebergs move down, they gouge large holes, valleys in the ocean floor.

MR. BUTT: Thirty feet deep in some places.

MR. NEARY: Well, thirty feet deep, the hon. gentleman says. I believe it is deeper than that in some areas of the Grand Banks. But the caps on these wells the blow out preventers and so forth are practically on the floor of the ocean. So when the iceberg moves along, even though you have moved the rig away from the hole, the production platform is shut down, the icebergs could still gouge the preventer, open up the hole, and when you would have an oil spill, could they not?

So here is what they are doing now, here is a new idea that the oil companies have, Mr. Speaker, and this rather startled me when I heard it, they are now testing a drill on the Grand Banks, the bit is thirty feet in diameter. Can you imagine a drill bit thirty feet in

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MR. NEARY: diameter? It is the largest ever made in the world, I am told. A drill thirty feet in diameter. And the reason they are testing it out here, they want to drill down with this thirty foot drill bit, go down sixty feet in the floor of the ocean and all of the equipment in connection with production and so forth would be put down then sixty feet, down in that hole. Fantastic, Mr. Speaker! It is absolutely -

MR. BUTT: It is a good idea, because basically it is out of the reach of the icebergs.

MR. NEARY: Well, that is right. That is why they are doing it. That is why they have this drill, thirty feet in diameter, drilling down sixty feet, so if they do have to shut off production and the platform moves or if it is damaged, then the iceberg will pass over the hole; if it does gouge a twenty or thirty foot hole in the valley as it

MR. NEARY: moves along it will not cause an oil spill. That is why they are doing it. But, Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely astounding! Can you visualize in your mind -

AN HON. MEMBER: What is that?

MR. NEARY: I am talking about something that the hon. gentleman does not understand and does not know about that he should know about, Mr. Speaker. It is simply astounding! I was astounded when I heard about it. It is amazing the technology they are developing. And you know, Mr. Speaker, what we have to bear in mind in this Province is that these oil companies are pioneering off our coast here. They accumulated an awful lot of experience in the Gulf of Mexico and in the North Sea and off Norway but nothing, Mr. Speaker, the technology is not available on the face of the earth today to deal with production off our shore.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Exactly.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, that is what we have to think about. They are pioneering, they are developing technology as they go. And this thirty foot drill bit, it is the first time it has ever been used, I am told, in the world, used off the Coast of Newfoundland.

MR. DINN: The first time for oil, too.

MR. NEARY: The first time for oil?

MR. DINN: They have made tunnels with them bigger than that.

MR. TULK: But not underwater though, did they?

MR. NEARY: Not underwater, no. Well, okay, let me qualify what I said, it is the first time that it is being used for offshore oil in the world. A drill bit thirty feet in diameter drilling down sixty feet into the floor of the ocean so that all the equipment associated with the production of oil can be put down sixty feet, down in the hole. And if an iceberg moves along it will not damage it, it will be too far down for the iceberg to knock the cap off or to

MR. NEARY: damage the blowout preventer.

MR. TULK: You say they are going down sixty feet, that is to the bottom?

MR. NEARY: Yes.

MR. TULK: How far below the surface will it be?

MR. NEARY: Oh, from the surface of the ocean down, I do not know.

MR. TULK: You are talking about the floor.

MR. NEARY: Sixty feet. It will be sixty feet down in the floor of the ocean.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear the hon. gentleman comment on this. Perhaps the hon. gentleman is not aware of it, because there has been no communication between the oil companies and the federal government and this administration.

MR. DINN: (Inaudible) oil.

MR. NEARY: Well, I hope so, because the hon. gentleman might be able to tell us a little more about this technology.

Mr. Speaker, it is mind boggling when you think about it. A drill bit thirty feet in diameter, a little bigger than the head of the hon. gentleman from Fortune Bay - thirty feet in diameter -

MR. TULK: And far more -

MR. NEARY: That, Mr. Speaker, that is what you call pioneering. We are a new frontier here, as far as oil and gas are concerned.

MR. TULK: That creates all kinds of safety hazards, does it not?

MR. NEARY: Well, it creates - that is right. That was the point I was making before my hon. colleague came in.

Because we are pioneering offshore on the Grand Banks, right in the heart of the breeding ground for the fish, we have to be extra careful. And I ask hon. gentlemen now to ask themselves this question - ask themselves a simple question: Up to now, Mr. Speaker, have we been conscious, safety conscious as far as damage to the Newfoundland environment is concerned? Up to the time of the Ocean Ranger disaster we were not even safety conscious as far as the people's lives who worked on these rigs were concerned.

MR. TULK: They laughed at you.

MR. NEARY: That is right. The hon. gentleman pooh-poohed the dangers in that particular matter when we brought it to his attention. But I am not

MR. NEARY: going to go back over that.

We are now talking about the environment and we are talking about the Newfoundland fishery.

MR. TULK: If he would learn something from it it would be all right.

MR. NEARY: Well, there is, unfortunately, a grave lesson to be learned from it.

Mr. Speaker, hon. gentlemen should ask themselves one simple question - the member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) no doubt has thought about this. I doubt if there is a member of this House who has not given some thought to the fact of whether or not oil and gas and the fishery co-exist.

MR. TULK: I believe the member for Placentia is having second thoughts about all this.

MR. PATTERSON: I made that speech that the hon. gentleman is making the year before last.

MR. NEARY: I would hope now that this bill will give the hon. gentleman an opportunity - it will be a springboard for the hon. gentleman to get up and repeat what he said because, obviously, that time it fell on deaf ears. But as I recall the hon. gentleman's speech, by the way, and the hon. gentleman did make some valid points and made a good speech I have to say that, it was one of the hon. gentleman's better speeches, if he recalls, and I applauded him for it.

MR. NEARY: the hon. gentleman's better speeches, if he recalls, and I applauded him for it. Instead of living in the past and talking about resettlement, for the first time I heard the hon. gentleman talk about the present and the future. He talked about the damage -

DR. COLLINS: Did you see the fisheries come back with a Tory (inaudible)?

MR. NEARY: What was that again?

DR. COLLINS: The Tory (inaudible) off Northern France and Southern England. The fisheries has come back here.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman said the fishery has come back. Well, one of the highlights of that propaganda, by the way, that was used when they started drilling for oil in the Gulf of Mexico was that the fish were coming back. As a matter of fact, they said that fish were breeding better around oil rigs. I do not know what kind of fish they were talking about down there in the Gulf of Mexico, but I was there, I had the opportunity to visit an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico, I was on board a semi-submersible rig in the Gulf of Mexico. That is more than I can say about Newfoundland. I have been about ten years now trying to get a trip to an oil rig off our coast and, Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that I have met with complete failure. They do not want anybody out there nosing around afraid we might learn something. But, Mr. Speaker, I believe it would be very worthwhile if the hon. gentleman could arrange for all members of this House to be flown out to one of these oil rigs so we could take a first-hand look at the situation, at conditions.

MR. TULK: They are too partisan for that.

MR. NEARY: Too partisan for it. May be they are. But it would be a very worthwhile project to do that. I think every member of this House would like to go and view



MR. NEARY: for himself, see for himself, what is happening offshore. I would like to go. I have been trying to arrange it now for ten years, just to go out in the morning and come back in the evening, not necessarily stay overnight.

AN HON. MEMBER: You cannot do it?

MR. NEARY: Cannot do it. Mr. Speaker, I would like to do it. If the hon. gentleman can pull a few springs for me, perhaps he can arrange for me to take a trip out.

MR. DINN: I have been out several times.

MR. NEARY: Well, the hon. gentleman obviously has the connections.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Minister responsible for the offshore, for Energy should arrange -

MR. TULK: Who is that now?

MR. NEARY: The President of the Council  
(Mr. Marshall).

MR. TULK: Oh, he is still there, is he?

MR. MARSHALL: That is right.

MR. NEARY: He is still there.

MR. SIMMS: Would you go out there then?

MR. NEARY: Yes, I would go out. Yes, Mr.

Speaker. I mean, it is no laughing matter, it is not a joke.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a very serious matter here.

MR. WARREN: The member for Grand Falls thinks it is a joke.

MR. NEARY: Yes, the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) thinks everything is a joke these days.

But we have to address ourselves to that question, the question being, Can oil co-exist with the fishery? That is the question we have to address ourselves to. And it is the biggest question facing Newfoundlanders and Labradorians today.

MR. TULK: The biggest question that hurts you.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is a large question indeed and something that we should not be treating lightly. And I tell you that I would like to see every member now while we are debating this bill in second reading - and all this bill does, by the way, in case the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) was out when I said this, this bill, 'An Act To Amend The Petroleum And Natural Gas Act,' while it is a step in the right direction and we are going to support it, all it does is provide compensation in the event of damage to the fishery. That is all it does.

MR. TULK: How much?

MR. NEARY: Well, the amount is not specified.

MR. TULK: How did they work it out?

MR. NEARY: Well, the way they have worked it out, where you have damage that could be attributable to a drilling company or to an oil company, they have to show evidence that they have financial means up to \$40 million to take care of any damage that might be attributable to their actions.

MR. TULK: Forty million dollars, is that all?

MR. NEARY: But that is only - they do not have to put that up in cash.

MR. TULK: If you could prove they did it.

MR. NEARY: If you could prove they did it.

But then again, where you have non-attributable damage to the environment and to the fishery - and this I do not understand - the amounts would be much less indeed, much less.

MR. TULK: Do they say how much?

MR. NEARY: No, there is no amount specified here because what they are doing here - and the hon. gentleman indicated during second reading that this is only a two year experiment - they are setting up a Fisheries Compensation Board for petroleum-related damages. 'The Lieutenant-Governor in Council may establish a board to be known as the Fisheries Compensation Board for Petroleum Related Damages consisting of a chairman and six other members. The members appointed under subsection (1) shall include representatives of fishermen, fishing companies and the petroleum industry. The board established under subsection (1) is a body corporate. "The board" means the board established under this section.' Now, the Compensation fund the hon. gentleman asked me about: 'The board shall administer a fund to compensate fishermen for damage to fishing

MR. NEARY: equipment or boats involved in the fishery or any losses consequential thereto including lost fishery time in harvesting arising out of petroleum exploration, development or production activities. Compensation and other expenses to fishermen under subsection (1) and the regulations shall be paid out of a fund to be called The Fisheries Compensation Fund For Petroleum Related Damages that shall be held by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the board.'

Now I presume the money will be put into the Consolidated Revenue Fund, am I right in assuming that? Will the Minister of Finance -

MR. TULK: That is a pittance.

MR. NEARY: It is pittance and the reason why I am belabouring the matter so much is that it does not meet the problem head on.

MR. TULK: Do you realize that in my district alone that \$40 million would not cover the losses of a community?

MR. NEARY: \$40 million, that is right, would not compensate for the loss of the fishery on Fogo Island, Mr. Speaker. Do you realize that?

MR. TULK: For one year.

MR. NEARY: For one year. But what is even more serious than - all this does is provide compensation.

MR. HODDER: Where did you get the \$40 million figure?

MR. NEARY: The minister told us that when he introduced the bill.

MR. TULK: That it would be \$40 million, if you could prove they did it.

MR. NEARY: If you could prove they did it. They have to show evidence.

MR. HODDER: Where is the \$40 million in the first place?

MR. NEARY: There is another point that I do not understand about this, by the way, "damage attributable" - now -

MR. TULK: Do you mean to tell me that if an oil rig hits a fishing boat -

MR. NEARY: If we have a blowout offshore -

MR. TULK: - if you have a blowout, say, that it is not going to be their fault anyway? So nobody can be sued.

MR. NEARY: That is right. "Damage attributable and damage non-attributable", now that is going to be very difficult.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I cannot hear them.

MR. NEARY: You cannot hear?

MR. MARSHALL: No, it is just that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) -

MR. NEARY: It is going to be very difficult to define, Mr. Speaker, and even if you can define it -

MR. TULK: Sold the fishery to the oil companies, did they not?

MR. NEARY: Well, that is right. This could be classed as a sell-out. It could be.

MR. TULK: It is.

MR. HODDER: Will this interfere with any legal claim that a fisherman might have against the oil company?

MR. NEARY: Well, that is another question, will this now be the direction that the fishermen will go if they have claims? Will they be barred from taking individual action?

MR. HODDER: No, it was on the radio this morning.

MR. NEARY: - they will not be barred from taking other action through the courts against oil companies for damage?

MR. MARSHALL: I will explain it to you.

MR. NEARY: Well I hope so, because the hon. gentleman certainly did not do a very good job of explaining it in his introductory remarks. I know the hon. gentleman is anxious to

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MR. NEARY: get the House closed, and I know his colleagues are breathing down his neck and saying, "Will she close today or will she close tomorrow?"

MR. NEARY: close tomorrow. But we are dealing, Mr. Speaker, here with one of the most serious problems that we have been faced with in our whole history.

MR. TULK: Give him his answers before we close.

MR. NEARY: Well, I think every member of this House should comment on this bill. And I know the hon. gentleman has silenced them all over there. The hon. gentleman will now wish to get up in second reading and close the debate but I am sure my colleagues who represent fishing districts will want to have a few words on this bill. I am sure my colleague from Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) would like to have a few words on this bill. The hon. gentleman has been out on very important business during the afternoon but I commend him to read Bill No. 54, to provide compensation for fishermen who may be affected by damages through oil drilling or oil production onshore, near shore or offshore.

MR. WARREN: Especially for the Labrador Coast.

MR. NEARY: That is why I commend it to the hon. gentleman, because of the drilling that is going on off Northern Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, the first question we have to ask ourselves, and then once we agree on the answer to that question then we have to ask ourselves, what steps can we take to see that fish and oil can exist side by side. So first of all we have to ask ourselves that question, can fish and oil exist side by side? No doubt overwhelmingly the answer will be yes. I think members will have doubts, they may feel very nervous about saying, 'Well, yes, fish and oil can co-exist', and they would be very nervous about it, but I believe in the interest of getting the oil field into production, getting the economy going, creating jobs for unemployed Newfoundlanders and so on, I believe the majority of members of this House could be swayed to the

MR. NEARY: thinking that yes, oil and fish can co-exist. I believe I would be one of the ones who would be swayed by that argument, Mr. Speaker. I had to speak on Saturday -

MR. HODDER: I have to say something now, I would need to see more evidence than that.

MR. NEARY: My hon. colleague says he has got to see a lot more evidence before he could be swayed that way. Well, Mr. Speaker, I could probably be swayed very grudgingly, and the reason I say that, Mr. Speaker, I would probably not hesitate, like I am doing, if we saw evidence of prevention, if we saw the evidence



MR. NEARY: that the technology is available to deal with oil spills off our shore. But the technology is not there. Will members let that sink into their brains, that there is not enough technology developed on the face of the earth today to deal with a major oil spill on the Grand Banks?

MR. WARREN: They could not even cope with a little Bunker C spill at Cape Race.

MR. NEARY: That is right. We have seen what happened in this Province in the case of just minor spills on shore, Mr. Speaker. Everybody panics. And, Mr. Speaker, we are very, very concerned on this side of the House, and we have been for some time, as I am sure certain hon. gentlemen there opposite are concerned. The member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) reminded us that two or three years ago when he made a speech on this very matter, and perhaps the hon. gentleman may wish to address the House again on this bill. It certainly provides a good opportunity for us to focus attention on the number one problem involved in the drilling offshore for gas and oil, the number one problem which is the threat to the environment. Most of the power in this bill, like all other bills brought in by this administration, is in the hands of the Cabinet, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. And there is no provision on this Board, by the way, for an outsider. The members appointed shall include representatives of fishermen, fishing companies and the petroleum industry, everybody with a vested interest. There should be somebody on this Board who does not have a vested interest in the fishery or the petroleum industry, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WARREN: Including representatives of just the fishermen. There are no fishermen on there.

MR. NEARY: That is right, representatives of the fishermen.

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MR. NEARY:

As I indicated earlier to the House, we will support this bill. We are not happy over the fact that it is has not gone far enough, Mr. Speaker. It is a good bill as far as it goes, but it merely scratches the surface and it is going to be hard to enforce. It is going to be hard to define damage that is attributable

MR. NEARY: damage that is attributable and damage that is non-attributable. But, Mr. Speaker, what it points up is that somebody in the administration, somebody in that government is anticipating in the not too distant future that a problem may arise, that an accident will happen that will cause all kinds of damage to our environment and to our fishery, and if that happens, Mr. Speaker, it will be a sad day for Newfoundland. If we ever have a major oil spill on the Grand Banks you can kiss the Newfoundland fishery good-bye, and it is bound to happen. They told us that the Ocean Ranger was like the Titanic, she was unsinkable, but she is gone and took eighty-four lives with her.

MR. WARREN: And this government is to blame.

MR. NEARY: No. Well, I am not going to get into that now.

MR. WARREN: I would say so.

MR. NEARY: And, Mr. Speaker, the same thing will happen to our fishery and to the environment if hon. gentleman do not wake up. You know, if hon. members knew the facts they would not be able to sleep at night, Mr. Speaker. They would not be able to sleep if they knew that, every day drilling is going on off this coast, our fishery is being threatened. How many ways can I say it, Mr. Speaker, to drive it home to hon. gentleman? I know the Minister responsible for the Petroleum Directorate and the offshore (Mr. Marshall) does not have seemed to have grasped that serious problem yet. The hon. gentleman is over there now in a panic looking at me and saying, 'What time are you going to finish? Why do you not sit down?' I can read the hon. gentleman's mind.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, as small-minded as the hon. gentleman is, the fact of the matter is that this is too serious a matter to just whiz it through the House, force it through the House at the last minute. Mr. Speaker, I notice now that the churches, the heads of the denominations in this Province are becoming more actively involved in social matters and to that I say, Hear, hear! I hope they will just not restrict their activities to housing and to unemployment and that sort of thing. I hope they will get deeply involved and share the concern of this side of the House, anyway, about the potential threat to our fishery and to our environment, Mr. Speaker. As far as I am concerned, that is the number one priority when we are talking about the offshore, when we are talking about the future of this Province and we are talking about our natural resources. The number one priority is to protect the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery, not let anything happen to it.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is very important.

MR. NEARY: It is the most important thing, Mr. Speaker. We have been allowing the drilling rigs and the oil companies to go out on the Grand Banks and off the coast of Labrador, Mr. Speaker, with no real restrictions placed on them as to procedures, how they should proceed with the drilling operations

MR. NEARY:

offshore. They are out there in a hostile environment, exposed to the elements of the North Atlantic, the savage storms of the North Atlantic, and the administration just lays back, Mr. Speaker, take the oil company's word for it that they are taking all of the measures they can to avoid a catastrophe on the Grand Banks. I put the question a number of times to influential oil people, drilling people and to the Canadian Coast Guard and asked them point blank, 'Can you cope with a major oil spill off our coast if we have a blowout?' And the answer is no, we cannot. They cannot even deal with a medium-sized oil spill, I would suspect. They went down here, as I said, a few years ago in Freshwater Bay and they took out a little boom and a net and they put it around a make-believe oil spill there in Freshwater Bay, which, as Your Honour knows, was on a day they had ideal conditions.

MR. WARREN:

They have not even cleaned up the one in Makkovik yet and it is a year and a half now.

MR. NEARY:

They have not even cleaned up the one in Makkovik yet a year and a half ago. And, Mr. Speaker, at that time they were training members of the LSPU Union, but then a dispute arose and they withdrew their services.

DR. COLLINS:

Your friend Christine Fagain says, 'Boom on. To hell with others.'

MR. NEARY:

That is really smart now, Mr. Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, would you not expect better from a professional man? You would expect better. Obviously the hon. gentleman has been contaminated by the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) and the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey) and a few more of his colleagues on the other side.

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MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we are talking about pollution here, and I could think of no hon. gentleman more qualified when we are talking about pollution than the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). We are talking about the greatest threat to the Newfoundland fishery and it is not marketing,

MR. NEARY:

greatest threat to the Newfoundland fishery is not marketing, not quality of fish, not productivity, the greatest threat is the offshore oil drilling. And it would be worth our while in this House, Mr. Speaker, to take a few hours now that we are debating this bill, not rush to close the House down, let each hon. gentleman get up and state his views, Mr. Speaker. I am sure they must have thought about it as much as I have and I have thought about it quite a bit, I am not just standing here now trying to fill in time, trying to stall the closing of the House, I am not doing that. Mr. Speaker, we are genuine and sincere when we express our concern about this matter of pollution, this threat to our environment and to the Newfoundland fishery. We are quite sincere about it.

We are glad to have the opportunity in debating this bill to be able to bring it up, Mr. Speaker. I will be down on Saturday, I think it is, speaking at the Youth Advisory Council who are having a conference in St. John's and the topic that they wanted me to appear on a panel on was this very matter of can oil and the fishery co-exist.

MR. PATTERSON:

No. It cannot.

MR. NEARY:

The hon. gentleman for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) says, 'No. It cannot.' He may be right. Maybe we are gambling with our future, and I do not mean gambling with the courts or gambling with the jurisdiction, we are gambling with our future.

You know, Mr. Speaker, you can have the best equipment in the world, you are bound to have an accident. If they keep drilling on the Grand Banks long enough and we get into production and we start producing oil, there is bound to be an accident. Now, you could say, well, we will develop all the safeguards we

MR. NEARY: can to keep the effect of that accident down to a minimum, they can say that, and they can brainwash people into believing that, Mr. Speaker, but the fact of the matter is that that potential danger is lurking there day and night, and it will become more serious when production starts. We have come pretty close, I understand, to having blowouts on the Grand Banks, we have had blowout preventers damaged. There a couple of years ago I asked



MR. NEARY:

a few questions of the member for Mount Scio (Mr. Barry) when he was Minister of Energy, about rigs that had to disconnect during storms, damaged the blowout preventer -

MR. WARREN: A close call in Labrador.

MR. NEARY: - and a close call in Labrador. Mr. Speaker, we do not know yet how much damage has been done on the floor of the ocean. There may be seepage, there may be leakage there now that we do not even know about. There was a time when the situation was not monitored, as the hon. gentleman knows, as it is now. And the hon. gentleman may be bored with what I am saying, this may be all very boring for the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker -

MR. WARREN: He is not too bright.

MR. NEARY: - he may not comprehend what I am saying, he may not realize the implications of a spill offshore, and it is not a matter of getting anybody going, getting up and making speeches, sitting down, that has nothing to do with it. It has to do with the greatest potential danger in our whole history, and that is the threat to the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery.

So, Mr. Speaker, while we are going to support this bill we do not think it goes far enough and it does not address itself to the real question, and that is prevention. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, as hon. gentlemen know. And I would hate to have to be the one to come into this House a year, two years, three years, or five years from now, as I am able to do with the Ocean Ranger disaster, and say to the hon. gentleman, "You pooh-poohed my warning to you in 1983 when I got up and spoke about the potential danger to the Newfoundland fishery, you pooh-poohed that the same as you pooh-poohed my letters

MR. NEARY: I wrote you about the Ocean Ranger".  
Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. gentleman regrets now pooh-poohing that matter and ignoring my letters to the hon. gentleman. I will never forget his famous statement about the captain, the Captain of the Ocean Ranger; the hon. gentleman left the impression that he was cracked. Yes, he was some cracked all right. He gave the best testimony that I have heard yet at the Ocean Ranger enquiry.

The hon. gentleman took the word of the company, what he could have done was investigated it himself instead of going to the company. And the company brushing it off by saying, "Well, this man is cracked. He has been going around the rig putting up posters and advertisements for jobs and so forth and so on." The hon. gentleman should not have pooh-poohed it.

MR. WARREN: Too late now. To late now with 84 lives lost.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is accepting the word of the drilling companies and the oil companies on the matter of the protection of the environment, or lack of protection of the environment.

MR. WARREN: And 84 lives.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, another question

MR. NEARY:

that arises, by the way, and I am glad that the hon. gentleman interrupted me there about this, is now that Newfoundland does not have jurisdiction, how are they going to be able to enforce this, 'An Act To Amend The Petroleum And Natural Gas Act'? How will this be enforced? Because when the hon. gentleman brought in an order for Mobil to take the rigs off the Grand Banks during the bad ice conditions offshore, they just thumbed their nose at the hon. gentleman. He could not enforce it, he could not do anything about it; he just stood there like a little school child, he could not do anything about it. How are we going to enforce this? When the Supreme Court of Canada hands down its decision now in another few days - maybe before the House closes we may have that decision - and no doubt that decision will uphold the decision of the Newfoundland Appeal Court, then how will hon. gentleman enforce these regulations? The only part of the regulations then they can enforce is where you have drilling going on onshore, out in Western Newfoundland where you have drilling onshore or drilling inside of the three mile limit. There is no way they can enforce regulations offshore if the jurisdiction, as no doubt it will, is given to the Government of Canada. So we may have a paper tiger, Mr. Speaker. We may just have a bit of paper here that may be worthless as far as the offshore is concerned, it may only apply to people who are drilling onshore or within the three mile limit. The hon. gentleman cannot enforce an order to the oil companies to remove their rigs, how does he expect to enforce these regulations? I do not think the hon. gentleman can do it.

MR. WARREN:

I say he is bluffing.

MR. NEARY:

I am not saying the hon. gentleman is bluffing. I think the hon. gentleman's intentions are honourable

MR. NEARY: and I have no doubt but they did all the research that the hon. gentleman spoke about when he introduced this bill, They researched it in the United Kingdom and based it on the experience in the North Sea and now we are going to have a two year pilot project here. Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that all that is true, but the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that under present circumstances it is going to be very difficult for this administration, for the provincial government here to enforce these regulations on the offshore, to impose these regulations on oil companies who are drilling offshore. The only way it can be done, and it points up again, Mr. Speaker, it

MR. NEARY: points up once more the need, the great need for this Province, is for this administration to carry out its mandate. And what was the mandate they were given? The mandate was to negotiate an offshore agreement. Because, Mr. Speaker, we need an agreement not only to stimulate the Newfoundland economy, to create jobs for unemployed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, we need an agreement, Mr. Speaker, in which to incorporate some of these suggestions and recommendations and proposals. We cannot carry on the way we are going now with no dialogue, no communication, no input from the Province with the oil companies, the drilling companies and the Government of Canada. You just cannot do that, Mr. Speaker, that is suicide!

MR. WARREN: Will I call a quorum?

MR. NEARY: No, my time will run out if you do that, my time will be up then, do not do that. I know they do not have fourteen members over there, they have not had fourteen members there practically all afternoon. The Premier was in here a couple of weeks ago telling us that our first responsibility and our first duty was to this House and the hon. gentleman has only turned up two days since he made that speech.

MR. WARREN: Look at the two hon. members over there gabbing away.

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes, they are having their own little Cabinet meeting down there now, the blind leading the blind.

So, what I am saying, Mr. Speaker - and I realize my time is running out - what I am saying is this, it is urgent that negotiations start with the Government of Canada immediately. I mean, look, you can criticize Mrs. Fagan all you want and you can criticize the member for Mount Scio (Mr. Barry) all you want, and you can

MR. NEARY: get up and get personal with the Opposition, you can lambaste the Opposition all you want, but, Mr. Speaker, what we have to think about in this Province is our fishery. Apart from the fact that we have to think about the economy, creating jobs for unemployed Newfoundlanders and about getting more revenue into the public treasury, expanding our revenue base, getting more taxes in so we can wipe out these large deficits that we have, Mr. Speaker, but out of all that, if I were to ask Your Honour right now, out of all the things I have just

MR. NEARY: Out of all the things I just mentioned, revenue, employment, service industries, etc., etc., the fishery, if I were to ask Your Honour which one rated the number one priority of all the things I mentioned, I am sure Your Honour, if he could answer me, would say, 'Well, of course, we have to protect the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery'. And we are not doing that now. So it is imperative, Mr. Speaker. Hon. gentlemen wonder why we keep stressing, day in and day out, and asking questions about an agreement, right now, Mr. Speaker, this government has no input, there are no face-to-face negotiations, no dialogue, no communications between this administration, the oil companies, the drilling companies and the Government of Canada. The hon. gentleman may get up like he did one day during Question Period and say, 'Oh, yes, the Petroleum Directorate has daily contact with the drilling companies and with the oil companies'. Well, of course, that is true, but this is only for the purpose of recording statistics, etc., etc. That is all. It has nothing to do with protecting the environment and safety regulations, Mr. Speaker. We found out recently when they issued their order to Mobil to take their rigs off the Grand Banks how much power and how much authority they have. Mr. Mobil just licked out his tongue at the minister and at the administration, thumbed his nose, Mr. Speaker, and I am afraid they are going to do the same to this bill with these regulations. How are they going to enforce these regulations? They can enforce them onshore, and we have people drilling in Western Newfoundland onshore and inside the three mile limit, but outside of that, Mr. Speaker, they cannot enforce these regulations. So my advice to hon. gentlemen there opposite is

MR. NEARY: to stop, stop, stop their silly nonsense, stop wasting time, stop being stubborn and stop sulking and get back to the negotiating table -

MR. TULK: Eat your sugar.

MR. NEARY: - and, yes, bring a couple of lumps of sugar and get back to the bargaining table and negotiate an agreement that will safeguard the fishery, safeguard the economy and safeguard the industry, this great natural resource that we have offshore that has been thrown away, that the Premier gambled with and lost when he threw the matter before the Newfoundland Appeal Court. I know, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman will now stand in his place and give us another lecture. The points that I raised are indefensible, Mr. Speaker, and the hon. gentleman will get up now and heap all kinds of abuse on them, the hon. gentleman may get personal with us again. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this debate will not close when I take my seat and the hon. gentleman will be allowed to get up and close second reading of this bill, this very important matter. I hope that will not happen. Some of my colleagues, I am sure, would care to have a few words, But I cannot help but impress upon the hon. gentleman again to stop playing his little political games, this matter is urgent, and get back to the negotiating table and get an agreement on the offshore before it is too late.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker



MR. YOUNG: Tell us about the stock market on oil and gas.

DR. COLLINS: You can make garbage bags out of petroleum products.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) can kid all he likes, the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young) can kid all he likes, but I am going to have a few words to say on this bill. I do not think that the hon. ministers realize the necessity of this bill. It will help fishermen in my district, but other people as well. We are talking about oil exploration in this Province. I believe Labrador is part of this Province and I am very concerned that this bill does not substantially cover many of the people in my district. Let me explain to the hon. Minister of Finance why I think that this bill is leaving out a very valuable section of the people in my district. We have the fishermen

MR. WARREN: covered, we talked about compensation for the fishermen. Now, nowhere in that bill can I see any compensation for hunters. And the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) can talk all he likes about garbage bags, he can talk all he likes about 'six feet under in the graveyard' or anything else, but he should remember too that about 30 per cent of the people in my district are not fishermen, they are hunters, and 80 per cent of the people in my district depend on wildlife such as sea ducks, geese and other fowl from the sea as part of their staple diet. We are going to compensate the fishermen for their boats and lost fishing gear, but if we have an oil well blow-out on the Labrador Coast it could have a drastic effect on migratory birds, it could completely destroy one of the staple foods of the people along the Labrador Coast. The Minister of Finance can talk all he likes about garbage bags, but along the Northeast Coast, over around Fogo, look at the drastic effect it could have on, just to name one bird alone, the Turr population.

MR. TULK: That is right.

MR. WARREN: So I think if we are going to talk about compensating the fishermen, we should also consider compensating the hunters who have to rely upon migratory birds and other species that are prevalent in Labrador waters, and I am talking generally about the Labrador Coast. We have people up there who are not fishermen at all, but come September or October every year, many families up there get an abundance of sea birds to carry them over the Winter. They only have an average income of between \$6,000 and \$10,000, many of them, and they cannot afford to purchase t-bone steaks, chicken and pork chops that maybe you and I can purchase, and they have to depend

MR. WARREN: on wildlife as a food source to supplement their diet of staple foods.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that if this government is concerned about a blow-out

MR. WARREN: and concerned about protection, then I believe they should include under Section 9.3 that the Board should administer a fund to compensate fishermen and hunters. I think the word 'hunters' should be included, Mr. Speaker, especially for those people who depend on this resource as a source of food supply.

Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned about how the appointments are going to be made. There are going to be representatives of the fishermen, but will they be fishermen or will they be from the Department of Fisheries or will they be somebody from the Fisheries Advisory Council? Why can it not be a knowledgeable fisherman, Mr. Speaker?

So, Mr. Speaker, I am going to support this bill, but I would also like for the minister to consider bringing in an amendment to it at least to protect hunters who have to depend on the sea bird population to supplement their diet. If the minister would consider putting this amendment to the bill, then, Mr. Speaker, I would have no objection in supporting it. But I am sure, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) said, if the Ocean Ranger did not go down we would have never seen this bill, this bill would have never been brought into this House. The Ocean Ranger went down, there were eighty-four lives lost and now we have the minister trying to patch up for the grave mistake that he made. He will go down into history as the man who

MR. WARREN: would not listen to the facts, we had to see eighty-four lives lost before he finally realized that there is a danger on our Grand Banks. Now he is bringing in bills for the sole purpose of trying to protect his own hide.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Is it the pleasure of the House the said bill be now read a second time?

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

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

MR. NEARY: I have no doubt but the Minister responsible for Energy would like to wind up second reading. He is probably outside, I saw him going down to do an interview, so could we wait for a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, until he comes back? I could go on and make another speech if Your Honour wants me to.

MR. TULK: Carry on.

MR. SPEAKER: That is out of order.

MR. NEARY: I believe the minister would like to make a few comments to close second reading.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, I rule there is no point of order, just a point of clarification.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: I just wanted to speak to the point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Is it the pleasure of the House that the said bill be now read a second time?

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: A point of order. Just a point of clarification; when Mr. Speaker mentioned my name there as though I was going to speak, actually I was making a move to respond to the point of order and I did not mean to confuse Your Honour in that respect.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Is it the pleasure -

MR. NEARY: Can we not wait until the minister comes back, Mr. Speaker?

DR. COLLINS: That was a point of order I raised there, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: On that point of order, I am sorry I was speaking to someone, I will rule on the point of order later.

MR. NEARY: He is coming now.

MR. MARSHALL: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. the minister speaks now he will close the debate.

The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Now there are just a very few things I have to respond to. The hon. gentleman talked for about an hour but I gainsay I can respond to him in about a couple of minutes.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Time is up.

MR. TULK: That is enough now.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, being urged on by both sides, particularly the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) and, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice is not in his seat, and I would draw it to the attention of this hon. House that when a member wishes to speak, it is rude to interrupt, but he should be in his seat if he is going to interrupt.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman there opposite in his hour-long speech asked can the fishery and the offshore co-exist. These are always concerns

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MR. MARSHALL: that this government has had and, indeed, this piece of legislation is one of the instruments that the government is using to try to make the fishery and the oil industry in this Province to co-exist. We believe it

MR. MARSHALL: can co-exist, but we can assure the hon. members of the House that if there are any problems in the co-existence and the melding together of both occupations that this government will always opt on the side of the fisheries of this Province. That is one of the reasons why we have this.

The hon. gentleman made much throughout all his speech about the fact that this is a bill not dealing with prevention, it deals with what may occur after the fact. He gave the impression that the government is doing nothing with respect to prevention environmentally. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have the strongest drilling regulations, the strongest structural regulations governing the offshore. And contrary to what the hon. gentleman said, that the administration is just lying back, I can tell the hon. gentleman that every time that any drilling rig connects with the bottom in the offshore, we know exactly each and every step that has been taken. The Petroleum Directorate modifies every step that is taken and it has been done and carried out in a very effective way.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to get at the hon. gentleman again. Look, honest to heavens, I do not know how the hon. gentleman can live with himself as a Newfoundlander. All I can say is he exults continually over the fact about his perceived concept that we have lost jurisdiction on the offshore and what is going to happen. I mean, how any Newfoundlander can exult in that I do not know. I say it over and over again and I say to the hon. gentleman that he is putting his politics before his Province, because there is no doubt in anybody's mind in this Province that if the federal government had been a Conservative government taking the stand that the present government is taking, where the hon. gentleman would be with respect to these matters.



MR. MARSHALL: With respect to this bill itself and the capacity of this government to deal with this matter, Mr. Speaker, I can say that the government is very, very apprehensive as to what might happen in the future with respect to the legal base of its regulations. And I do not think that anyone can have any greater reason for this concern than to point to what occurred with respect to the Winter drilling this year, when

MR. MARSHALL: effect the federal government - and there can be no question about it - put lives at risk when it countermanded the order to stop Winter drilling. It has not to date been called to account for this. There is no doubt about it that the record will show that the federal government put lives at risk this Winter as a result of countermanding that particular order. Not only did the federal government do this, but, after the fact, it is a very sad indictment, I think, that the minister concerned was not grilled in the House of Commons with respect to the matter and has not been grilled yet. To date we can look out the window and see an iceberg outside the Narrows, which is a testimony as to the danger which occurred on the offshore drilling this Winter, and at the same time is it not only evidence of the danger that occurred and persisted, but we also have the fact that the federal minister of the day countermanded that order, put lives at risk, and, very surprisingly, has not even been called to account for his actions. I would certainly expect, if the shoe had been on the other foot, that there would be a hue and cry for the provincial minister's resignation as a result of that because what you are talking about is putting lives at risk. The House of Commons has not even called him to task about it, all of which is evidence of the fact that this resource cannot be administered best from so far a distance away as Ottawa. And, Mr. Speaker, if they are that careless with respect to human lives, the next question is can we expect them to be any more diligent with respect to the environment. And I do not think so and I think that is one of the biggest problems we have. What we are trying to do is to deal with the situation, Mr. Speaker, by bringing in responsible, reasonable measures such as this. And I heard the hon. gentleman from Tornqat Mountains (Mr. Warren) ask

MR. MARSHALL: certain questions and I heard him, as I left the Chamber, indicate or ask the question, "Does this apply to Labrador?" This applies to Newfoundland and Labrador -

MR. WARREN: Does it apply to hunters?

MR. MARSHALL: What do you mean, does it apply to hunters?

AN HON. MEMBER: Sea birds.

MR. NEARY: Does it apply to hunters?

MR. MARSHALL: Well, yes, it would apply to hunters because the regulations would apply. There are two aspects to this bill. It is the fishery which we highlight, because we always highlight the fishery, and the environment. Now the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is just seething with jealousy there. He spoke for an hour and said virtually nothing. The member for Tornqat Mountains

MR. MARSHALL: (Mr. Warren) spoke for five minutes and asked a very incisive question. The answer to the question is it is covered in the environment.

MR. WARREN: Is the bird hunters' catch covered the same way as a fisherman's?

MR. MARSHALL: I am pretty sure that would be covered with respect to the environment and certainly if it is attributable, the action can be. Now, in 9.8 in (f) and (g), the regulations can define the sources and types and damage for which compensation may be made and prescribe the criteria for eligibility.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: And I can tell the hon. gentleman, particularly as he gave the only good speech on this - the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) spoke for an hour and did not say too much - that the hon. the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) in five minutes made a very good point and we will bear that in mind when we are framing the regulations.

MR. WARREN: Why could it not go in 9.3?  
Why could you not include fishermen and hunters?

MR. MARSHALL: Well, I mean, we will look at it. This is an enabling bill, a bill that gives a very broad brush, and we will make the brush as broad as is necessary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: With those comments, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Petroleum And Natural Gas Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 45.

Motion, second reading of a bill,  
"An Act To Amend The Labour Standards Act," (Bill No. 56).

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Minister of Labour  
and Manpower.

MR. DINN:

Mr. Speaker, this is not an  
earth-shattering amendment to the Labour Standards Act.  
What we are talking about here basically is that we have  
a Labour Standards tribunal appointed with alternate  
members and their term of appointment is for two years.  
What we are doing basically is allowing for the Labour  
Standards tribunal to remain seized of an adjudication rather  
than have that pass on to the new Labour Standards tribunal.  
So, Mr. Speaker, that is about all the amendment is. We  
have a situation presently where there is a case before the  
Labour Standards tribunal from Wabush that is very important  
to the unions down in Wabush, and we would not want to have  
that pass on to the next Labour Standards tribunal and be  
heard all over again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DINN:

So, Mr. Speaker, unless hon.  
members opposite have some questions on the amendment,  
I move second reading.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the  
Opposition.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, it is not as earth-  
shattering as Bill No. 59 coming in tomorrow, I can guarantee  
you that, "An Act To Amend The Public Service (Collective  
Bargaining) Act." I guarantee you that one will stir up  
quite a bit of controversy, but this bill - the hon. gentle-  
man is right - is harmless, the one that is going through now.

MR. NEARY: But the one that is coming in tomorrow, I can give the hon. gentleman advance notice that we intend to dig in on that one, the bill that will outlaw strikes in the public service, because that is what it is doing. It will outlaw strikes through the backdoor.

MR. MARSHALL: That is not so.

MR. NEARY: It is so.

AN HON. MEMBER: Relevant.

MR. NEARY: We will deal with that tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!  
The hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is certainly not being relevant to the principle of the current bill under debate.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I could not help but latching onto the hon. gentleman's remarks about this is not an earth-shattering piece of legislation. When I looked at the other piece that the hon. gentleman is going to bring in tomorrow, I could not help commenting on it.

MR. MARSHALL: It is a real Tory bill.

MR. NEARY: Yes, that is a real Tory bill that is coming in tomorrow, Bill No. 59, I guarantee you, you will hear some howls from one end of this Province to the other.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have no objection to this bill. All it does is give continuity. Where members of the Board are considering a matter, they will be allowed to finish that particular project. Well, we are all for that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. minister speaks now he closes the debate.

MR. DINN: I move second reading.

On motion, "An Act To Amend The Labour Standards Act", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 56).

On motion, second reading, A bill, "An Act To Amend The Government - British Newfoundland Corporation Limited - N.M. Rothschild & Sons (Supplemental Agreement) Act, 1978". (Bill No. 51).

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Dawe), who is out of the House today, I was asked to introduce this bill. It is one of a series of bills where BRINCO surrenders certain areas of land to which it had the right of exploration. The bill incorporates surrenders which were made in 1980 and 1981, which have already been passed, together with the current one for the end of December 1982.

MR. MARSHALL: The reason why we wish this to be passed before the House rises for the Summer is because the government wishes to include this area in its maps to show the area which is available for exploration so that we can encourage exploration of this property which BRINCO is not going to explore.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, there is no desire on my part to delay the debate. There is just one question. Have BRINCO been over this area? This is an area, I take it from what the minister said, that BRINCO has shed. I think that was the phrase that was used 'shed'. Of course, that was the way the legislation was done, and this is a pattern that goes back to Commission of Government. I think, that large concessions, very large areas were given to these companies to explore. I suppose the classic one was the one for Labrador Mining and Exploration and they shed an area that later became Wabush Mines in Labrador. Maybe the minister could tell us when he closes the debate whether or not this is an area that BRINCO has been over, and maybe he could tell us as well whether any of the areas that have been gone over by exploration companies which then have been shed and as a result have been opened up for private staking with the result that private staking -

MR. YOUNG: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: If the gentleman from Harbour Grace would permit, I would like to carry on for a moment or two, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying any of the areas that have been shed and thus made available for private exploration



MR. ROBERTS: and then have been subject to prospecting by individuals, have any of these turned up mineralization? What I am getting at, obviously, is whether the examinations - whatever you call them - the prospecting that has been done by these large companies really did provide anything on the areas which they have shed? So, there are really two questions there; whether this is an area which has been shed, in the first place, and, secondly, what has been the subsequent history of the shed areas once they have been opened up for private exploration? As I recall it, when this change was brought in in the mid '70s it was brought in mainly as a result of the urging of the Government of Canada. The officials of Energy, Mines and Resources up there always had a very strong policy feeling that the way the Newfoundland Government was going at it was wrong, and obviously they won their day and convinced the Moores administration, I guess during the time when the present member for Mount Scio (Mr. Barry) was in his first run of the Energy and Mines Portfolio, first of two and maybe more to come, they convinced him of that and the system was changed, Fine. The result has been a great deal of prospecting activity for a year or two and then, if memory serves me, it fell off to nothing immediately after that, so perhaps the minister could tell us what the history has been. You know, I am quite willing to approve the bill, that is no problem, but what is the story behind this area, has it been explored and what is in the history of the areas that have been explored and then have been shed?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): If the hon. minister speaks now he closes the debate.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I can indicate this area which is being shed, there had been a certain amount of investigation by BRINCO with respect of it. I really do not know to what depth or to what degree they did, but obviously they must have assayed the area before they give it up and found that it is not prospective. They did a certain amount of it.

MR. ROBERTS: Is this being shed under their legislation or is it a voluntary thing ?

MR. MARSHALL: No, it has been shed under their legislation. And as to whether or not those have been finds on land that has been given up, in this particular case there have not been finds. I cannot say for sure, but the information that I have been given is that there are certain concerns that are interested in going over the area, and that is why we want to act now. That is not to say that these firms will be there, but they have indicated an interest and that is why we want to be sure that the land is free for this Summer's exploration programme.

On motion, a bill,

"An Act To Amend The Government - British Newfoundland Corporation Limited - N.M. Rothschild & Sons (Supplemental Agreement) Act, 1978", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 51).

Motion, second reading,

a bill, "An Act To Amend The Mineral Act, 1976". (Bill No. 53).

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, again I rise on behalf of the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Dawe). There are two aspects to this bill. First of all, as the main part of the explanatory note says

MR. MARSHALL:

it empowers a person to go on private lands for the purpose of exploring for mines and minerals where they have been reserved from the private land owner, which it is in most cases. In other words, it makes it possible for the Crown licence to be able to carry out the purpose of the licence. And the other aspect of it, it gives the Crown the right to take back surface lands and mineral rights which have been abandoned and, if the Lieutenant-Governor in Council appropriate, it can be done without compensation. And I might say that it is going to be done, it is going to be used in the case of the St. Lawrence mines.

MR. ROBERTS:

Without compensation?

MR. MARSHALL:

Without compensation.

MR. ROBERTS:

What is the principle?

MR. MARSHALL:

At the time when the mines were abandoned,

At the time when the

MR. MARSHALL: the work down there was abandoned, there were negotiations with the company concerned and we made it quite plain at the time. But the principle behind it was that where large companies such as that, in those particular circumstances-it is very difficult to have one set of circumstances to apply to every particular instance that may occur - but in this particular one, and others that may occur like it in the future, where companies get the right to explore, the principle is that they get a right that is owned by the people of this Province and it has to be understood that in order to keep that right they have to explore, and they just cannot sit on those rights and not turn them to good account for the people of the Province.

MR. ROBERTS: It is not a mine working, it is exploration.

MR. MARSHALL: That is right. Yes.  
So that is the purpose of the bill, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: I wonder if we can let that stand over until tomorrow, because there is a very obvious question that I would like to ask the minister, How does that tie into St. Lawrence where, of course there was a mine working, a working mine that the owners, I guess it is fair to say, abandoned, as far as I know they just turned their back and threw the keys on the table and walked away. But I would like an opportunity to say a few words simply to ask the minister and perhaps overnight, if he is going to speaking for the Energy Minister (Mr. Dawe) tomorrow, if he could have a word with the relevant official and maybe we could deal with that tomorrow?

MR. SPEAKER: It is noted that the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) adjourned the debate.

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

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

On motion, the House at its rising do adjourn until tomorrow Tuesday, at 3:00 P.M.

MR. ROBERTS: Before Your Honour leaves the Chair, I wonder if I could ask the House Leader for the Government (Mr. Marshall) whether he anticipates that we will be here longer? I am particularly concerned about Wednesday, because my Private Member's Motion stands to come up for debate on Wednesday.

MR. CARTER: We were going to throw that out.

MR. ROBERTS: It may be that the government members are going to throw it out, they have thrown out worse and never thrown out better. But, Mr. Speaker, be that as it may, forgetting the ignorance of the gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. Carter), I do have a serious question for the minister. I know that Oppositions close the House, not the government, if government had their way it would have been closed three weeks ago, it would probably never have opened. But could he tell us whether, you know, he expects the House will finish tomorrow or not? I gather we on this side do have some strong objection to this rewriting of parts of the Collective Bargaining Act. I think it is fair to say the minister should anticipate some strenuous debate on that point. That may help him in his gestimating.

MR. MARSHALL: All I can say, Mr. Speaker, the last time I was asked a question like that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) came down on me like the Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold.

MR. ROBERTS: And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.

MR. MARSHALL: All I can tell the hon. gentleman is, after the Mines Bill there are three more measures, as I have given the hon. member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) the list of, that have go through before we rise for the Summer. Now, you know, if the gentleman could tell me that he would anticipate that these would go through by tomorrow afternoon, we will not be here on Wednesday, but all I can say is that those three measures must go through.

MR. ROBERTS: Absolutely must?

MR. MARSHALL: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER(Russell): It is moved and second that the House do now adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday at 3:00 P.M.

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Answers to questions

tabled

May 30, 1983

*Tabled by Hon. Miss  
of Justice, 30 May 1983*

Order Paper, May 27, 1983

QUESTION No. 133

Fire protection outside the Metropolitan area of St. John's  
by fiscal year.

1980/81	Dept. of Municipal Affairs	\$500,000
	St. John's Fire Department	\$101,300
	Fire Commissioner's Office	\$204,700
1981/82	Dept. of Municipal Affairs	\$500,000
	St. John's Fire Department	\$142,200
	Fire Commissioner's Office	\$219,100
1982/83	Dept. of Municipal Affairs	\$500,000
	St. John's Fire Department	\$230,800
	Fire Commissioner's Office	\$261,800
1983/84 (Projected)	Dept. of Municipal Affairs	\$500,000
	St. John's Fire Department	\$250,000
	Fire Commissioner's Office	\$305,000