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TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1983

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we had some questions for the Premier and it seems that the Premier and a dozen or so ministers are absent from the House. Could the hon. gentlemen tell us if there is going to be anybody in the House that we can ask questions of today?

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I think most of the ministers are here. I wonder if the hon. gentleman could tell us where over half of the Opposition is at the present moment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: While we are waiting for the ministers and the Premier to arrive, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I will direct a question or two to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) in connection with a Lieutenant-Governor's Warrant, a Special Warrant, that he tabled in the House last week involving \$36,000 that he requested via a Lieutenant-Governor's Warrant for an unforeseen expenditure of \$36,000 to McConnell Advertising. Could the hon. gentleman tell us what this was in aid of?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, that matter has been ongoing for quite a while and there were claims and, shall we say, counterclaims. Having gone through all of this in great detail, it came down that that was the residual amount that was considered to be owing to that particular firm.

MR. WARREN: For what?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, that is kind of vague, 'a residual amount.' Could the hon. gentleman give us a few more details? Could the hon. gentleman tell the House if the findings and the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee, for the year ended 31 March, 1979, if these recommendations were carried out? Especially the recommendations concerning the recovery of monies that was spent on two films of the PC Convention in Gander, Mr. Speaker, that were allegedly done for CBC's Provincial Affairs free time telecast. Could the hon. gentleman tell the House if this money for these two films that were done of the PC Convention in the Fall of 1978, I think it was, if that money has been recovered by the minister or by the public Treasury?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I will take that as notice, but if the hon. member opposite will allow me at this stage to state that to the best of my knowledge this \$36,000 did not have anything to do with that, and that that matter he referred to was followed up. It was certainly not neglected, it was followed up. But I will just take notice, if I may, just to see the finalization. I am certain that it did go to Justice and I just do not recall at this stage whether it was decided that the case was not such that we could pursue it in the courts or whether it is still ongoing there, But I will take it as notice the hon. member's question.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: I am horrified at the answer from the hon. gentleman that he would go and ask for a Special Warrant for \$36,000, not knowing whether or not the money that was -

DR. COLLINS: I said it does not have anything to do with it.

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

DR. COLLINS: It does not have anything to do with it.

MR. NEARY: It does have something to do with it. Why would the hon. gentleman pay McConnell Advertising \$36,000, He can call it what he likes, but what is it for? And he does not know, Mr. Speaker, if the Public Treasury has recovered the amounts that were spent on two films of a Tory Convention in Gander in 1978, and it was recommended by the Public Accounts Committee and by the Auditor General that this money be recovered. Now was it

MR. NEARY: recovered or was it not before this \$36,000 was asked for in a Special Warrant? They could not even wait for the Budget, the estimates, they could not wait for the House, Mr. Speaker. The hon. gentleman just wanted to pay it out to his friends, McConnell Advertising, not knowing whether or not the money had been recovered from McConnell's for these two films - or from the Tory Party, rather. Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, -

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: - if the hon. gentleman will excuse me, not recovered from McConnell's but recovered from the P.C. Party for these two films, because they were the ones who commissioned McConnell's and who are liable for the expense.

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I told the hon. member that I would get him the details. I have no doubt whatsoever that this is the residual amount that, after all of this was gone through, this is the residual amount owed to that firm. But the hon. member asked for details of the other thing and I said I would get him the details. I did not say that there was anything outstanding, I just said I would supply him with the details that he requested.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, would the hon. gentleman also undertake to get the details as to whether or not the money has been recovered from the Tory Party in this Province for these two films, as recommended by the Public Accounts Committee, which has four members from that side of the House, three from this side. They have the majority on the Committee, Mr. Speaker, and here are the recommendations endorsed unanimously, this was an unanimous report of the

MR. NEARY: Committee, Mr. Speaker,
would the hon. gentleman undertake to get that information
also for the House tomorrow?

DR. COLLINS: Yes.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, in that
case I will go on to what I consider

MR. NEARY:

to be a very grave and serious matter, important matter. Members will recall the other day, or about a week ago, when I spoke in this House I mentioned the French Island of St. Pierre. I said that they had to be watched carefully as they are asserting their claim inside the Canadian 200 mile management zone. And this was confirmed last night in a CBC telecast called Land and Sea and I believe the Governor of St. Pierre indicated - and I realize, Mr. Speaker -

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

A point of order, the hon.

President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, is the hon. gentleman making a speech or is he giving us soliloquy? I mean, the hon. gentleman watches television programmes. I suppose some other people saw what went on on the television programme. If he has a question he can address the question and direct it to a minister. That is what the rules are.

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I believe in every jurisdiction in the world except here - in the Parliament of Canada, at Westminster and in every other Province of Canada - when you are asking a very grave and serious question you are allowed a reasonable preamble. And that was what I was proceeding to give, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I suppose it is really up to the ruling of the Chair to decide how much of a preamble,

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): if any, any hon. member is allowed to give.

MR. WARREN: Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER: In this particular case, I would suggest that the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) has used his preamble.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Well then, Mr. Speaker, according to reports there was a meeting or discussions between the Premier of this Province and the Governor of St. Pierre. I realize, by the way, Mr. Speaker, that these matters are of more concern to the Parliament of Canada than they are to the Legislature, but because of the implications for this Province I feel the matter should be raised here. Did the Premier in fact hold discussions or meetings regarding these matters of St. Pierre asserting their rights inside of our 200 mile management zone or not? Did the hon. gentleman have any discussions with Governor Pinn on St. Pierre or here sometime within recent times? I do not know exactly when.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: No, Mr. Speaker, the subject matter to which the hon. Leader of the Opposition refers -

MR. CALLAN: France was ceded St. Pierre by the Treaty of Utrecht.

PREMIER PECKFORD: - the historian from Bellevue (Mr. Callan) notwithstanding - is an issue which I have raised on a number of occasions with the External Affairs Department of the Government of Canada who are involved in negotiations with France. It is not a matter in which the Province has jurisdiction. Therefore, we have been working with the Canadian government, the federal government, on this matter and over the last couple of years I have had a number of meetings with ministers in the federal Cabinet

PREMIER PECKFORD: and ongoing communications
with them. Really what it boils down to now is an impasse
between the Canadian government and the French government
over the disposition of the question of rights relative
to St. Pierre et Miquelon and the amount of rights that

PREMIER PECKFORD: the country France will continue to have there, so it is a matter that has been handled by the External Affairs Department in the Canadian Government to whom we have been making representations to make sure that our position is protected, and Canada's position is protected. That is the area in which the Province has been involved. Obviously we would not go and meet with the Governor of St. Pierre and Miquelon on our own because we would be completely outside of our jurisdiction to do so and it would be highly inappropriate. But we have been working through the External Affairs Department and Fisheries and Ocean, it is a complex set of circumstances here, one has to do with treaties that can expire I think it is in '86- that is off the top of my head, as I remember it, you have the other issue of the question of jurisdiction out from the land mass of St. Pierre and Miquelon. I think some of the early positions of the French Government were that they were moving the jurisdiction out so far that they ran into the Micmacs, who are claiming jurisdiction and had half the Island of Newfoundland almost in there, if you took it to its absurd and logical conclusions, so-called. So there is the question of fisheries rights and treaties beyond '86, as I remember it, as I say off the top of my head, Mr. Speaker. Secondly there is the whole question of jurisdiction of the sub-sea soil relative to France's position and Canada's position. The two of them are sort of inter-mingled and there have been ongoing discussions and meetings between the Canadian Government and the French Government over it. And, as I understand it, there has not been any settlement or agreement between the two governments on the final disposition vis-à-vis, one, the fisheries treaty after '86; two, the ongoing jurisdictional question as it relates to sub-sea soil.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman of course is perfectly right. If they implemented the 200 mile limit in St. Pierre, of course, that would take in Confederation Building, take in half of Newfoundland and we would all be part of France and not Newfoundland. Mr. Speaker, is the hon. gentleman aware that within the past year St. Pierre is using a number of scallop boats, I believe it is six scallop boats, inside of Canada's 200 mile management zone, and these scallop boats are being protected by French gunboats, French frigates and that they intend to bring over another half dozen or so scallop boats to fish inside of our 200 mile territorial zone? Is the hon. gentleman aware of that?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I am not personally aware of it at the present moment. I have been given information over the last number of months on what was going on at St. Pierre and Miquelon and we have been in constant touch with the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. De Bane) and with the federal authorities who have the jurisdiction for Canada over this. So I would have to get the most recent report that obviously the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is referring to, but I am aware that there are ongoing efforts by the French government to increase their presence and to extend their jurisdiction and activity in fishing matters off St. Pierre and Miquelon.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the reason I raised these questions is because it is obvious that we can no longer continue to ignore these aggressive moves by a sovereign country. Is the hon. gentleman aware that France has already started a seismic exploration programme off the coast of Newfoundland inside Canada's 200 mile territorial zone?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, it sounds like the House of Assembly in the year anywhere from 1850 to about 1905, which is not to say that it is not relevant because it is very relevant. Yes, I am aware of the activities that the French are involved in as it relates to seismic work and this kind of thing. And we are in constant touch with the federal authorities to monitor what is going on and to try and resolve some of these outstanding issues that exist between Canada

PREMIER PECKFORD:

and France.

MR.NEARY:

A supplementary, Mr.

Speaker.

MR.SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. Leader of the

Opposition.

MR.NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the hon.

gentleman, of course, in his remarks there must realize that the more things change the more they remain the same. Mr. Speaker, in connection with France exercising or flexing its muscles inside of Canada's 200 mile territorial mile zone, would the hon. gentleman tell the House now if it is more urgent than ever before that we get an agreement on who owns the offshore resources quickly? Or could we end up in the international court with France laying claim to these resources?

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman laughs at that but it is not as far-fetched now as the hon. gentleman may think, because the French are after forgetting more about diplomacy than we will ever know on this side of the world. So , Mr. Speaker, does the hon. gentleman not feel now that the ownership of these vast offshore oil resources should be established quickly?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I guess the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) will have to direct his question to the Chief Justice of Canada, Mr. Laskin, I mean, that is where that matter lies at the present moment on the question of ownership of offshore resources. It lies with the Supreme Court of Canada at the present moment.

Now, as it relates to the International Court at the Hague, or whatever, I mean, this society as a provincial society is part of a larger nation. We are a part of Confederation and, you know, that matter, the International Court of the Hague, is one I guess they would have to entertain issues relating to countries, and in that case I guess it would be Canada and France, if in fact on the South part of the Island of Newfoundland there was this ongoing dispute. And I do not know, Perhaps that has to go to the International Court. I do not know enough about the Law of the Sea to know what the situation is.

In most cases, as I understand it, the law which is prevalent here is the coastal state having jurisdiction over the minerals on the Continental Shelf. That coastal state, as far as we are concerned, is Newfoundland, and, as far as Canada is concerned, it is Ottawa, it is the federal government, and that issue is in the Supreme Court of Canada. I doubt very much whether anybody can sustain a credible legal argument - and I would bow to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) on this obviously - can sustain a credible legal argument on the question of the jurisdiction of minerals on the Continental Shelf relative France and Canada, relative

PREMIER PECKFORD: to the land mass of the Continental Shelf called the Grand Banks on the South Coast of Newfoundland. I doubt it very much. I would say if one examined the Treaty of Utrecht or Paris, and the other treaties as related to that, that it is current legal thought imprinted in just about everybody's mind that the natural extension of the land mass under water belongs to that state that has been extended under the water and, therefore, that would preclude the kinds of possibilities that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is speculating on. But whether there are some special treaties, special legal documents that are hidden away somewhere in some vault which would allow France to allege or claim certain things that would subtract from that principle that I just enunciated, which is now an international law principle, I am not aware of. So unless and until I became aware of some of those particular legal documents or principles or treaties which may be existing that I do not know about, I would only have to conclude that I can go on the information that I have, which is that it would be improbable if not impossible for France to be able to make any credible claim to jurisdiction over the mineral resources on the Continental Shelf and South Coast.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman's policy was to set aside the ownership and to have an agreement without determining the owner. Now, in the light of what is happening, with France flexing its muscles, taking a hard look at the offshore oil and gas, would the hon. gentleman

MR. NEARY: not agree that it would have been wise, and indeed a very wise move to determine the ownership of these offshore resources quickly before an action is taken in some other court in some other part of the world?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: I do not think the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) really knows what he is talking about here, Mr. Speaker. I think he is in over his head, as he is most times, to be quite frank about it. He forces me to make that kind of observation, which perhaps is better left unsaid.

Our strategy as it relates to the offshore is that we were willing and it makes no difference. Sure there should be in legal adjudication as to who owns it, but, regardless of who owns it, we were willing and saying that we should perhaps put it aside and work out a joint management/ joint revenue sharing agreement. I mean, that was the position we came to in the negotiations. We still argue strongly that we have certain proprietary rights to it, but that is what we were willing to do in the negotiations vis-à-vis Newfoundland and Canada.

MR. NEARY: But the ownership question would still have to be determined.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Oh, no question. Obviously it would have to be determined but then it could still be put aside. The question was not whether it was to be determined or not determined, the question was that it would be put aside for the sake of an agreement. I do not know if the Leader of the Opposition understood that when he asked his question. It makes no difference about the adjudication, the question was that it would be aside.

MR. NEARY: I do not agree with it but I understand it.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Well, obviously the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) does not agree with very much that we do over here, Mr. Speaker, and I can only say to him that he has not been able to persuade very many of the people in Newfoundland to go along with him.

MR. NEARY: We will see.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey). Mr. Speaker, during the past number of months we have heard this government talking about the fact that it is very hard to get money from Ottawa, yet I understand just about a week ago the federal Minister of Housing announced an extension to the Lakeside Senior Citizens' Home at Gander, and the minister shortly thereafter called a press conference to say he was refusing to accept money from Ottawa. I am just wondering why did the minister decide not to accept federal money to extend the senior citizens' home in Gander? Is it because it was announced without the minister's approval?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
Social Services.

The hon. Minister of

MR. T. HICKEY: No, Mr. Speaker, it certainly was not announced because this minister did not approve it. Let me first of all say that this government acknowledges the need to expand the Lakeside Home. Let us get that one out of the way first of all. Secondly, my department, which has the prime responsibility for the provision and development and indeed the delivery of chronic care services throughout the Province, over the last four years developed criteria by which existing homes would be expanded and new homes would be built, and established a list which prioritized those areas in terms of who would be first and second and third and so on. In August of 1982, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government I announced a four year programme of expansion and new facilities, of which Lakeside Home was one.

Canada Mortgage funded by way of interest subsidy a number of projects, and had been doing this over the year, and that is the programme which the hon. gentleman refers to which involves the federal government.

St. Patrick's Mercy Home is under construction. There was a six-bed addition to the Grand Bank facility. There is a small expansion of the Valley Vista Home in Springdale. There is a home required in Placentia. There is an expansion required in Bay St. George, and there is an expansion required at Harbour Lodge. Gander, at the present time by way of priority, on the following list, on a list which would have the following priority; first, an expansion which is critical to Harbour Lodge; second, a new facility for Placentia; third, an expansion to the Bay St. George Home; fourth, an expansion by fifty beds to the Lakeside Home in Gander. This is based, Mr. Speaker, on

MR. HICKEY:

critical need as established.

Mr. LeBlanc came to the Province, parachuted into Gander for a couple of hours, in company with the MP, Mr. Baker, and announced a programme, Mr. Speaker, and a project to which he had no authority or right under jurisdiction to announce. The most he could have done was say that by some magical means they had found some monies representing some fifty units - that is what Canada Mortgage refers to them as, fifty units - after Canada Mortgage telling this government for the last twelve to fifteen months they had no money, after Canada Mortgage telling this government even, Mr. Speaker, to the extent that they had no units, no money to allow us or help us open group homes for the mentally retarded children in this Province and adults that we want to house

MR. HICKEY: in the various communities,
of which Gander is one, by the way.

MR. NEARY: You cannot spend your money
(inaudible)

MR. HICKEY: And after telling us repeatedly,
Mr. Speaker, that there were no funds available, all of a
sudden Mr. LeBlanc and Mr. Baker could find fifty units
and come to Gander secretly and make this grandiose
announcement which Mr. LeBlanc referred to as a Christmas
present.

MR. NEARY: Pure politics.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I had to consult
my colleagues, which I did. I did not make a decision as
a minister, this government made a decision, Mr. Speaker.
And I conveyed to the Board of Directors the government's
decision that we cannot allow Mr. LeBlanc or anybody else
to set the priorities by which chronic care services will
be developed and delivered in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. HICKEY: And, Mr. Speaker, if in fact
this government were to allow that it would be abdicating
its responsibility to the people whom we represent.

MR. NEARY: You played political
games before.

MR. HICKEY: Why, Mr. Speaker, would we
go through the trouble to develop a priority list based on
critical need if in fact we are just going to have someone
come from Ottawa and make announcements hither and thither all over
the place? Now, Mr. Speaker, let us go a little further
into what the announcement made money-wise. Mr. LeBlanc's
announcement as it affects the federal Treasury had the
following effect, of a mortgage term for thirty-five years,
starting off with approximately \$177,000 a year. That would

MR. HICKEY:
have been the fiscal effect
on the federal Treasury.

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I believe one
of the rules of this House - and the rules apply to both
sides of the House - is that you have to give brief answers
to questions. The hon. gentleman is rambling on there
trying to justify his little political games that he is
playing with the senior citizens' home expansion in Gander
and I ask Your Honour to enforce the rules and ask the
hon. gentleman to be brief in his answer to my colleague.

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

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman
asked a question, the hon. minister is giving a full,
complete and factual answer on -

MR. NEARY: It is not a Ministerial Statement.

MR. MARSHALL: - a matter of interest to the
general public. It is noteworthy that the hon. gentleman
who raised the question did not get up on a point of order.
It is just the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) who
does not want the information that the hon. gentleman is
giving, which is very telling information -

MR. NEARY: We do not want bluff.

MR. MARSHALL: - and is essential in order to
answer the question.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

It is correct, of course, that the concept of the Question Period is for as many questions to be asked and as many answers to be given as possible. However, sometimes the very nature of the question asked requires a longer answer and indeed it might be the responsibility of the Chair to indeed rule some questions out of order and have them placed on the Order Paper as written questions.

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I will shorten it. As my colleague, the hon. the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) said I did not see the hon. gentleman who raised the question get up and complain. He wanted information, obviously. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) does not want information, he just wants rumours. He does not want facts, he just deals in rumours.

MR. NEARY: You should come more often.

MR. HICKEY: And he does not like what he is hearing, Mr. Speaker, which are facts. The fact of the matter is that the effect on federal Treasury was \$177,000 per annum, the affect on this provincial Treasury was \$1,500,000 and why should we allow anyone to come from Ottawa and announce that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HICKEY: Now, Mr. Speaker, let me finish the answer by saying the fact of the matter is that there was a little conspiracy, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I can understand from the minister that he does have his nose out of joint the same way that the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) probably had her nose out of joint when they announced some federal funding for a gymnasium on the Northern Peninsula from Ottawa and they refused it.

Mr. Speaker, if the minister said that it was not on the priority list, maybe he can explain to the hon. House why the closing down of the Markland Hospital and the closing down of the Buchans Hospital would be on a priority list? Mr. Speaker, is the minister going to take the attitude that from now on we will build out own hospitals, we will extend our own senior citizens' homes and not accept any money from Ottawa.' Are we ever going to accept any money from Ottawa for the construction of senior citizens' homes in this Province?

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

MR. HICKEY: Okay, Mr. Speaker, there are a half a dozen questions there, let me deal with the most important one, at least from where I sit at the moment. First of all, with regards to my anatomy, it is my ear I had some surgery done on, not my nose. My nose is not out of joint and, yes, we will accept money from Ottawa, Mr. Speaker. But we will not accept money from Ottawa if it means capitulating to a little political game and a little political conspiracy by Mr. Baker and Mr. LeBlanc to come and give a Christmas present that in fact they are not prepared to pay for.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. NEARY: We will get back at it again tomorrow.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

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

MR. GOUDIE: Mr. Speaker, I have two reports to table, the financial statements of the Newfoundland Crop Insurance Agency for the year ending the 31 March 1982; and financial statements of the Livestock Owners Compensation Board for the year ending the same date, 31 March 1982.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, Question 151 by the hon. member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) with regard to capital grants for community sports facilities and consideration for firefighting equipment, I table the answer and that is that this information is not available in our department but in the Departments of Culture, Recreation and Youth and Justice, and the ministers in those departments have been asked to provide the information when available.

PETITIONS:

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

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege to present a petition signed by 148 residents of the Town of Makkovik in my district. The prayer of the petition is as follows:

"We, the undersigned, residents of Makkovik, Labrador, request that you look into the programming of CBC TV. It has come to our attention that we will not be seeing News Final, we never did see Land and Sea, and Here and Now only covers the highlight stories from Labrador. We feel that we,

MR. WARREN: being a part of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, are entitled to see what the rest of the Province watch on CBC television. We urge you to look into it immediately and remain residents of Makkovik."

Mr. Speaker, to begin with I believe it is a disgrace to know that in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador there are people who only get the opportunity to view one TV station. Up until recently people in my district

MR. WARREN:

had the opportunity to see News Final and, during the lunch break, CBC Regional News. Now this has been replaced, I might add, Mr. Speaker, that it is a disgrace that for the people in my district and many other Newfoundlanders the half hour programme that was usually seen during the lunch hour in my district, the CBC Regional News, and I think it was Brophy's Corner, this has been replaced by a French programme from Montreal, no English whatsoever, a French programme. I think it is a disgrace for CBC in this Province, or in all of Canada, to try to intrude with a French programme when it is not necessary.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

How many people speak French

in Makkovik?

MR. WARREN:

Not one, not one person.

In fact, the French language, I do not think, is even taught in the school there. Secondly, I do have quite a bit of respect for - in fact, the letter that accompanied this petition agrees with what I am about to say, that the News Final, immediately after the National News Update, the News Final is then replaced by the IBC, by The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation.

Now the people in my district, and particularly in Nain and Hopedale, do appreciate the IBC programming, but at the same time they do not want to miss the News Final because it concerns their own Province. So I have taken the liberty of writing to the President of CBC suggesting that if this is necessary to keep the IBC broadcasting in being, the least they can do is have other slots available. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this House should support this petition in saying that if we are a part of this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador at least all the residents

MR. WARREN: should have the opportunity to enjoy the activities, the update of the local news, weather and sports, as the case may be, as it pertains to this Province. Mr. Speaker, it is an utter disgrace. Although this petition does not mention it, tomorrow morning if the people in St. John's or the people in Corner Brook get up and turn their radios to CBC they will hear news from throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. But if the people in Makkovik turn on their radio station tomorrow morning, what do they get? They get a traffic report from downtown Montreal. That is

MR. WARREN: what they get on the radio station in Makkovik. There is no such thing as any radio news. They get a downtown report of what the traffic is like on the Queen Elizabeth Bridge in Montreal. And I think this is a disgrace, knowing that we have a taxpayers' television and radio station in this Province that is paid for by the people in Makkovik as well as by the people here in St. John's and there is no reason why they cannot be tuned in to what is going on in this Province.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I place this petition on the table to be referred to the department to which it relates.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that somebody there opposite would respond to my hon. colleague's petition. I believe I might be able to motivate the minister responsible for Communications, the junior minister in the administration, the gentleman who has a very small department to administer. We wonder sometimes what he is doing. Here is a little project passed over across the House by my hon. colleague who is doing his job for not only the residents of Torngat Mountains but for the whole of Labrador.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the hon. gentleman will rise in his place when I take my seat and let the people of Northern Labrador know that this administration is not going to sit idly by and tolerate the fact that they have lost the only Newfoundland newscast that they had on television in this Province.

MR. NEARY: You would swear, Mr. Speaker, to listen to my colleague, the hon. the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren), that these people were living in Bangladesh. They are not foreigners, they are Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and they have every right to know what is going on in their Province. They have every right to know what is going on in the people's House, Mr. Speaker. So I think my hon. colleague and the people who signed the petition have made a very valid point indeed. And it is about time, Mr. Speaker. We have three governments in Canada, we have the federal government, the RCMP and the CBC, and it is about time that the CBC were made accountable for their actions. I notice that some steps have been taken recently to change the hierarchy of the CBC -

AN HON. MEMBER: It is about time.

MR. NEARY: - that is right, my hon. friend says it is about time and I agree - to try to make them more accountable to the Parliament of Canada. They have to remember, Mr. Speaker, that they are there at the leisure of the Parliament of Canada the same as we have Crown corporations established in this Province that have to answer to this House. The CBC are becoming a law unto themselves and they answer to nobody and, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the message will go out of this House today loud and clear that we do not intend to sit idly by in this House and see services in Labrador downgraded, that the people will be kept informed as to what is going on in this Province.

MR. WARREN: They do not even see Land and Sea.

MR. NEARY: They do not even see Land and Sea. It is a pity they missed that programme last night, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ANDREWS: That programme was ever so good.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman and I never agree on anything else, I can tell you it was a well-documented and well-produced programme.

MR. MORGAN: It has been on fifteen years in Newfoundland.

MR. WARREN: Land and Sea, period.

MR. NEARY: Well, you know, there is a lot to be said for that. There is more investigative journalism in that one programme than there is in all the rest of the things the CBC in Newfoundland do, and I would have to buy that, Mr. Speaker. The people who do Land and Sea, you have to give them credit. But, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the people of Northern Labrador will not see it and they will not find out what is going on in the people's House, they will not get the news from Newfoundland.

MR. WARREN: They had a programme last week about Labrador and they could not even see that.

MR. NEARY: They had a programme last week, my hon. colleague tells me, about Labrador, and they could not even see it. What kind of a way is that to treat Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, Mr. Speaker?

MR. NEARY: So I hope the message will go out today from this House, that we do not intend to sit idly by and see the great CBC or anybody else, or any other Crown corporation downgrade services in Labrador. The people are intitled to these services that, here on the Island, we take for granted. You can get paid television, cable television, you can get seven or eight or ten channels, and if you have the new technology you can probably get twenty or thirty channels. Down there they are forced to watch the CBC, forced to watch it, And I agree with the Premier on that, I mean, can you imagine every day the CBC coming into your living room? But at least they have one channel and that is what the CBC was established for.

MR. WARREN: And now they have French for lunch.

MR. NEARY: Now they have French for lunch. The CBC was established as an instrument of national purpose and of national unity, Mr. Speaker, and I think it is about time that they lived up to these ideals and these principles and I support the prayer of the petition. I challenge the minister responsible for communications although he may feel inferior over there sometimes, he may feel like a junior compared to the rest of them, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WINDSOR: Do not be so rotten.

MR. NEARY: That is not rotten, that is a statement of fact.

MR. WINDSOR: It is low-down and unnecessary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman should go and look after the Marystown Shipyard.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman has lots on his plate to look after. But, Mr. Speaker, we hope that -

MR. DINN: I hope he does a better job with that than you did with Social services.

MR. NEARY: And, Mr. Speaker, do a better job than the hon. gentleman is doing with the Workers' Compensation Board at the present time. And, so, Mr. Speaker, I will deal with the hon. gentleman -

MR. DINN: Did you get a reply?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I will deal with the hon. gentleman in due course when I table his letters that he wrote to the Chairman of the board to get jobs for his buddies.

MR. DINN: Go out and read your book.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, so I hope the minister responsible for communications in this Province, although I realize it is a federal matter, but nevertheless I think the prayer of that petition, the message should be conveyed to the federal authority, the CRTC and have the CBC brought to task for the way they are downgrading services in this Province and for the inferior quality of their broadcasting in this Province.

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

The hon. Minister of Communications.

MR. NEARY: Oh, I got him up. I got him up.

MR. DAWE: Mr. Speaker, I would support the petition, as a matter of fact, presented by the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren). As a

MR. DAWE: matter of fact I think he should have done me the courtesy, at least, Mr. Speaker, of informing me that he was going to present the petition before he brought it in.

MR. SIMMS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: I did.

I told you about it last week.

MR. DAWE: No, Mr. Speaker, he did not tell me and I would remind him that in future -

MR. NEARY: He did tell you.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

MR. DAWE: - when presenting a petition he should do me the courtesy of informing me beforehand. Anyway I would, as I said, Mr. Speaker, support the petition presented by the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) and I would say, first of all, the responsibility for the reception of television signals in any part of the country, whether it is in Ontario or in Newfoundland, it happens to be the responsibility of the federal Department of Communications. While I would say that, at the same time, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. gentleman that I will take his petition and I will, in fact, get in touch with the Minister of Communications (Mr. Fox) to convey to him on behalf of the people of Makkovik the concerns that the people there have. As I said a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, the responsibility for this particular matter lies with the federal Department of Communications but we have been very active over

MR. DOYLE:

the last couple of months, as the hon. gentleman knows, up along the Labrador coast. We, the provincial government, have gotten involved with the federal government in putting in a television service into a very remote area of Labrador, the Paradise River area, in the hon. gentleman's district of Eagle of River, and that has been a very successful project. It has been cost shared by the province and the federal government and we hope some day, Mr. Speaker, to be able to get involved in expanding that programme into other parts of Labrador. What we have been doing and what we will continue to do right now, however, is to continue to motivate the people in these remote and underserved areas of our Province to get involved, more or less, in providing their own type of television service. We have the expertise within the division of Communications to make all of the necessary arrangements, and all the necessary contacts, and all the necessary applications to get licencing from the CRTC for that type of service. We have been successful, as I have said, Mr. Speaker, in promoting that up along the Labrador coast, and we are advising people that they should get involved in trying to bring the CanCom service, first of all, into these areas, which is designed specifically for remote and underserved areas of our Province. Again I would support the petition so ably presented by the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren), and I will, Mr. Speaker, take that petition and make my federal counterpart, Mr. Fox, fully aware of what is happening.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MARSHALL:

Order 19, Bill No. 13.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order 19, Bill No. 13.

The debate last day if I remember

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): correctly was adjourned by the hon. the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall).

If the hon. member speaks now he will close the debate.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Well, Mr. Speaker, there is very little actually left to say with respect to this bill. As was pointed out yesterday, what this amendment will do is establish that a victim - a person who has suffered injury or indeed death - a victim will not be prejudiced in terms of any compensation that he might be entitled to because of the fact that the person who caused that injury to him may not have had the mental capacity to form what is called a criminal intention. Now, the hon. gentleman yesterday was up saying, 'Well, if you cannot have criminal intention it is not mens rea and how can there be a crime?' That is the whole purpose behind this very programme of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, that it is oriented toward the victim and oriented toward compensation, and the fact that a victim has been awarded compensation under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act in no way affects the status of the perpetrator of that act. It is not a conviction of a criminal activity on his part, what it is is a determination of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board that this specific person is a victim and has suffered loss because of the act of somebody else. So that is essentially what it is.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: The whole emphasis of it is victim oriented, compensation oriented.

One other matter I will point out, I said yesterday that the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board was not well known. I think that is probably true in the general public, but certainly people seeking legal advice, certainly lawyers or people who give legal advice, would know about it or certainly should know about it. And there is in preparation, I think to be available for distribution early in the new year, a sort of information pamphlet put together by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and the Legal Aid Commission, for distribution throughout the Province in places like police stations and post offices, social services offices, those kinds of places. So it would be the intention that this would create public awareness of it. I am not sure that there is a great deal more really can be said on it.

I move second reading.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 13).

On motion, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider certain bills, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): Order, please!

A bill, "An Act To Revise The Law Respecting Dentistry And Dental Surgery In the Province." (No. 26).

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Accident And Sickness Insurance Act, 1971." (Bill No. 14).

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

A bill, "An Act To Ratify, Confirm And Adopt An Agreement Entered Into Between The Government Of The Province And The Government Of Canada Respecting The Restructuring Of The Newfoundland Fishery." (Bill No. 88).

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

A bill , "An Act To Give Effect To The Convention On The Civil Aspects Of International Child Abduction". (Bill No. 63).

On motion, clauses (1) through (8) , carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

A bill, "An Act Act Respecting Reciprocal Enforcement Of Custody And Access Orders". (Bill No. 64).

On motion, clauses (1) through (21), carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Public Utilities Act". (Bill No. 28).

On motion, clause (1), carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

A bill, "An Act Respecting Pension Benefits". (Bill No. 7).

On motion, clauses (1) through (29), carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

A bill, "An Act Respecting The Provincial Archives And The Management of Public Records". (Bill No. 31).

On motion. clauses (1) through (21), carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

A bill, "An Act To
Amend The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act". (Bill No. 13).

On motion, clause (1),
carried.

Motion, that the Committee
report having passed the bill without amendment, by leave,
carried.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The
Fire Prevention Act." (Bill No. 12)

On motion, clauses (1) through
(10), carried.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, with respect to clause
(11), subsection (c), and then subsection (d), I move that the
word 'wilfully' be removed.

On motion, amendment carried.

On motion, clause (11) as amended, carried.

Motion, that the Committee report
having passed the bill with amendment, carried.

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

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

MR. AYLWARD: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the
Whole House have considered the matters to them referred and
have directed me to report Bill Nos. 13, 26, 14, 88, 63, 64,
28, 7, and 31 without amendment, and Bill No. 12 with
amendment and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and
adopted, amendments ordered read a first and second time, now, by leave.

On motion, amendments read a first
and second time, bill No. 12 ordered read a third time on tomorrow.

On motion, bills Nos. 13, 26, 14, 88,
63, 64, 28, 7 and 31 ordered read a third time, on tomorrow.

Motion, second reading of a bill,
"An Act To Amend The Department Of Education Act". (Bill No. 5).

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

MS VERGE: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to move second reading of this bill, "An Act To Amend The Department Of Education Act".

The bill has three provisions, the first of which accords with a request of the Denominational Education Committees to change their name from Denominational Education Committees to Denominational Education Councils, and to change the name of the senior administrator of each of the councils from Executive Secretary to Executive Director. And I understand the DECs have adopted these new names in practice.

The second provision actually accords with the practice of the last couple of years in formally providing for three assistant deputy ministers in the Department of Education. The prior arrangement was just two assistant deputy ministers, one responsible for programming for primary, elementary and secondary as well as post-secondary and adult education, which was an impossible job. The improved arrangement, with the increase from two to three ADMs, allows one assistant deputy minister to concentrate on policy and programming for primary, elementary and high school education and the other to concentrate on advanced and continuing education.

The third provision provides for the establishment of a senior advisory committee on advanced and continuing education. This body would have a parallel constitution to the existing General Advisory Committee which has been functioning for quite some time in accordance with the Department of Education Act. The General Advisory Committee have the mandate of

MS VERGE: advising government through the Minister of Education on education policy. It is a body representative of the major agencies involved in primary, elementary and high school education and in practice has devoted itself to issues relating to kindergarten through senior high school but has not dealt with the important and current issues of post-secondary and adult education, and, therefore, I feel it is high time that we set up a senior advisory committee, as is provided for in this bill, to advise government on post-secondary education policy. And the bill provides for a representative group of people to comprise this senior advisory committee, representatives of the Department of Education and the Department of Labour and Manpower, as well as Memorial University, the colleges and the Denominational Education Councils, as presumably they will be quite soon, and representatives of the general public.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all hon. members will want to support the objectives and the provisions of these proposed amendments.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, that is what I would call skimming

MR. NEARY:

over what is a very, very significant change, a very significant amendment to the Department of Education Act. The minister just skimmed over it as if it is nothing. The hon. minister knows that she is in hot water with the Denominational School Boards in this Province over some of these changes. And what we are seeing here today, Mr. Speaker, is the first step on the part of the minister and the administration to abolish the denominational system of education in this Province. That is what is happening, Mr. Speaker.

MS. VERGE: (Inaudible) Denominational Education Committees (inaudible) and support it.

MR. NEARY: We will see, I have the annual report of the Catholic Education Council right here in front of me, I do not know if the hon. minister has taken the trouble to read it or not, And I have heard some of the comments and remarks that were made on Sunday past in some of the churches, in this diocese here at least, in connection with the changes the minister is making in the Department of Education.

MS. VERGE: What changes?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we just heard the hon. minister outline the changes, and they are here in the bill. Mr. Speaker, and I submit that the hon. minister gets up and says, 'Well, everybody will want to support this bill, everybody will want to support it.' Well, everybody who supports it should bear in mind that what the minister is doing on behalf of the administration is taking away from Newfoundlanders a constitutional right that is enshrined in the terms of -

MS. VERGE: How?

MR. NEARY: - Confederation -

MS. VERGE: How is it doing that?

MR. NEARY: - and setting about as a first step, this is the initial step, to get control in the Department of Education by setting up all these associate and deputy ministers. That is a first step for the minister to take control of education in this Province and take it out of the hands of the denominations where it constitutionally belongs.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us see what the annual report of the Catholic Education Council says about some of these matters. 'Last Fall a subcommittee of the General Advisory Committee submitted to the GAC a revised School Act. Copies of the revised act were distributed to constituent members of the GAC for study and reaction.'

MS. VERGE: That is the wrong act.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister says the wrong act. The hon. minister was not listening to what I said. The act that she is asking to have us amend is a first step -

MS. VERGE: How?

MR. NEARY: Look, Mr. Speaker, why does not the hon. minister go and be briefed by her senior officials before she brings an act into the House on the implications of that act? I know the hon. minister does not know very much about education matters in this Province, but the least the hon. minister could do was to be briefed and find out, Mr. Speaker, what it is we are doing here, and not just come in and try to ram something

MR. NEARY:

something through the House quickly that could have very serious consequences and implications. It is a first step, I am saying to the minister, it is a first step to grab control in the Department of Education away from the Denominational Committes. That is the first step. The next step, Mr. Speaker, would be to abolish the system. 'In our initial response to the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) in January, we expressed our concerns with the general thrust of the proposed new act, which will be an act somewhere down the line that the minister proposes to bring in to this House, the New Education Act, somewhere down the line.

MS. VERGE: That is the School Act.

MR. NEARY: Well, call it what you like, an Education Act, a School Act, it will be an act.

MS. VERGE: That is the Department of Education Act.

MR. NEARY: I understand, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. the minister does not seem to understand what it is we are doing here. I wish the hon. minister would go and be briefed by her officials. We are paving the way, we are laying the groundwork, we are putting control in the minister's hands in the hands in the department.

MS. VERGE: What control?

MR. NEARY: Taking the control, taking the jurisdiction. It is an initial step to take the jurisdiction away from the Denominations in this Province. That is what it is, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS: Have you read the bill?

MR. NEARY: Yes, I have read the bill.

MR. SIMMS: How can you come to that conclusion?

MR. NEARY: 'ACEC sub-committee was subsequently appointed to make a thorough study of the proposed legislation,' And the legislation I am talking about is the bill that will

MR. NEARY: be brought in when all these other little bills have been brought in and the minister has her little empire established, then in comes a bill to abolish the Denominational system of education.

'One of the major concerns expressed in the report is that under the new act' - which is not in the House yet, but will be here probably next Session - 'it would certainly appear that the Minister of Education is empowered to exercise broad regulatory powers in establishing, organizing and administering schools.' And that is it precisely, Mr. Speaker, they are right on. The Roman Catholic Education Council is right on. Now we are seeing the initial step, the first step towards that goal on the part of the minister.

MS. VERGE: How?

AN HON. MEMBER: We are all waiting with bated breath.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker: How? I have said it three times. already, I will say it again, that this bill takes away powers and authority -

MS. VERGE: What powers?

MR. NEARY: - that were previously in the hands of the denominations -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: None then.

MR. NEARY: - and puts it in the hands of the minister.

MS. VERGE: The changes were made that they asked for.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, now I have lost my page.

But anyway, Mr. Speaker, the Catholic Education Council have grave reservations over the changes that are being proposed by the minister in that department, and they have said so.

MS. VERGE: Not these changes.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, these changes are only the first step in the minister's devious plan, in her diabolical plot, to do away with the denominational system of education in this Province. Dr. Tracey, some time ago, commenting in The Monitor on June 9th, claimed that The Daily News in a story quoting from this report that I just read, the minister blasted the News over a schools act story. The minister is obviously on the defensive.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this bill may sound like a - and the minister deliberately makes it sound that way - little innocent piece of legislation. The amendment would provide for the appointment of a new Senior Advisory Committee and make the necessary consequential changes to the existing law and that committee will report to the minister. The amendment would in the act listed in the schedule restyle the several Denominational Education Committees as Denominational Education Councils and change the title of the Executive Secretary of a committee to that of Executive Director. Well, Mr. Speaker, that may be inconsequential.

So what I am saying here, Mr. Speaker, is that when we see these Education bills coming before this House in this session and in the next session of the House to whittle down the authority of the Denominational Committees and put the power and the authority in the hands of the minister and the bureaucrats, it is a beginning, it is a first step, to taking away the denominational system of education in this Province. Certain denominations in this Province are very well aware of what the minister is up to.

MR. HOUSE: This is giving them more clout than they ever had.

MR. NEARY: They are aware of what the minister is up to, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: I only wish the hon. minister could have heard what I heard on Sunday morning about the appointments in the Department of Education getting out of balance, Mr. Speaker. Therein lies one of the problems.

MR. HOUSE: What kind of problems?

MR. NEARY: Does the hon. gentleman want me to tell him or is he so gullible and so stunned and so naive that he does not know?

MR. MARSHALL: Where did you hear it?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I heard it from a gentleman of the Cloth. If the hon. gentleman ever heard what was said he would be ashamed to sit over there and make snide remarks across this House, he would be ashamed, he would hang his head in shame.

MS. VERGE: I would like to hear it.

MR. DOYLE: We would all like to hear it.

MR. NEARY: The hon. minister would like to hear it. The hon. minister has heard it and has not paid any attention to it. The hon. minister has heard it on more than one occasion.

MS. VERGE: I do not know what you are talking about.

MR. DOYLE: Nobody does.

MR. NEARY: Is that so? Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister should have the courage - I am not saying there is not room for changes in the educational system in this Province.

MR. NEARY: I am not arguing for or against the denominational system, and I want that clearly understood. I will take -

MR. WALSH: You are sitting on the fence on it.

MR. NEARY: No, I will take my position when that bill comes in, when that diabolical bill the minister is preparing, when that is brought into the House, unless it is changed, unless the minister follows the recommendations and the changes of the major denominations in this Province that have been violent towards that bill, unless the minister is prepared to do that and change the bill and drastically amend it before it is brought into this House, Mr. Speaker, I will wait for the bill before I take a stand. But, Mr. Speaker, what I am saying now, in putting the government on their notice is that before we can make any major changes, before we can move towards abolishing the denominational system in this Province, there has to be a constitutional change made to the Terms of Union, the terms of Confederation with Canada. And these changes can only be brought about by bringing a bill before this House and having it passed, and then have a bill passed in the Parliament of Canada. That is the only way that the Terms of Union can be changed. And the minister can strive all she wants to carry out her diabolical plot, Mr. Speaker, as she has been trying to do in the last year or so without the courage of coming into the House with a bill so that we can debate it and get our teeth into it and then vote for or against it.

MR. MARSHALL: What bill are you talking about?

MR. NEARY: The bill that the minister is preparing down in her department.

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

MR.SPEAKER (Dr. McNicholas): On a point of order. The hon. President of the Council.

MR.MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, look, what the minister has brought before the House is Bill No. 5, An Act To Amend The Department Of Education Act, which is a very simple bill, the principle is very simple, and now the hon. gentleman, lost for words as he usually is, wants to talk about an imaginary bill that according to him is down in the minister's department. Now, Mr. Speaker, on the rules of relevancy when you are debating the principle of a bill you have to debate what is in the bill, everybody knows that, and you do not debate a bill that you imagine is a bill which is not a bill and that is what the hon. gentleman is doing.

MR.NEARY: To that point of order.

MR.SPEAKER: To that point of order.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR.NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman obviously was not following the debate very closely. What I was saying is that this bill and subsequent bills that will be brought into this House are designed to undermine the denominational system and place the education in this Province further under state control, Mr. Speaker.

MR.SPEAKER: To that point of order I would rule that the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) was straying away from this particular bill and debating a bill that is not before the House.

MR.NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So when the members on both sides of the House vote for this bill I hope that they realize that it is merely an initial step and a part of a plot on the part of the minister and the administration to abolish the denominational

MR. NEARY:

system of education in

this Province. Mr. Speaker, that matter can be the subject of a continuing debate in this House, and no doubt it will.

I have no choice with Your Honour's ruling but to forego any remarks that I may have to make in that regard, but we are dealing here, Mr. Speaker, and I believe this would provide members with an opportunity for a very wide-ranging debate, An Act To Amend The Department Of Education Act, Mr. Speaker. Certainly it gives members the right and the responsibility to talk very wide-rangingly about problems in the Department of Education, talk about financing, does it not? The hon. gentleman is agreeing that it does, Mr. Speaker. In that same report, for instance, the annual report of the Catholic Education Council, they talk about the strike last year and they say, 'While there was very little opportunity for us to influence the outcome of this issue Archbishop Penney as Chairman of the CEC did issue a plea to the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) and the

MR. NEARY: President of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association and the President of the Federation of School Boards to resume direct negotiations to resolve the dispute." And listen to this, Mr. Speaker: "The whole issue is of much concern" so they say "to us, since we have no direct input into these negotiations."

Now, I ask the minister, will this bill change that situation? No, it will not, Mr. Speaker.

I just have one or two more comments to make as a result of this bill and this report that I have in front of me. Mr. Speaker, will the minister tell us if this bill we have before us will allay the concern on the part of the Catholic Education Council, on page 13 of their annual report? Mr. Speaker, will this bill, as I say, allay any concern over this matter?

And listen to this: "A major concern of the school boards and the high schools who bear responsibility for the implementation of the programme" - talking about Grade XII - "is the financial support which has been made available by government to introduce the reorganized programme and the additional year of high school. Almost all school districts have encountered major problems in providing the essential space, materials, equipment and teachers to implement this programme successfully. The difficulties have been brought to our attention by school boards and individual high schools, particularly during the past two years, and the CEC, along with the Integrated and Pentecostal Education Councils have made numerous representations to the government on this matter." I would like to hear the minister's comments on that and have her tell us if these four changes being made to amend the Department of Education Act will cure that problem,

MR. NEARY: and how we are doing with
Grade XII, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WARREN: Lousy!

MR. POWER: That is your opinion.

MR. NEARY: We will hear what the minister says. The Minister of Forestry (Mr. Power) cannot even look after the forestry workers, Mr. Speaker, let alone become an expert on education in this Province.

MR. POWER: Grade XII is the best thing that has happened to this Province's education system since Memorial University.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we are not arguing whether it is good or whether it is bad.

MR. POWER: Your cohort is.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, let us see what the Catholic Education Council says: "While acknowledging the general concept of this programme, the brief expressed serious reservation with regard to the level of government funding to implement the programme, funding for additional space and for the additional equipment and operating costs incurred by the introduction of the programme. Concern was also expressed over numbers of teachers available for the new programme and the in-service needs of teachers."

They are not saying they are against Grade XII, neither are we, Mr. Speaker.

MS VERGE: I thought you wanted Grade XII.

MR. WARREN: In due course, yes, in due course.

MR. NEARY: Let me remind the Minister of Education (Ms Verge), Mr. Speaker, that I was the first in this Province to advocate that we have Grade XII,

MR. NEARY: the very first, long before the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) saw the inside of this House, or even dreamt of running for political office.

MS. VERGE: Your colleague just said it was five years too early.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is saying that the government did not give the denominational boards the funding necessary for the proper implementation of Grade XII and therein lies the problem.

MR. WARREN: Even the textbooks are not ready for Grade XII.

MR. NEARY: And, Mr. Speaker, "Further, we fully appreciate of course the demands on government, especially in a time of financial restraint, We feel obliged to reiterate at this point, however, that while we are positive and supportive of the concept of the programme, we do have serious reservations about the level of financial support which government has assigned to it up to now." There is the problem, Mr. Speaker. That is the problem. And these amendments are not going to cure that.

MR. HOUSE: This bill is not a finance bill.

MR. WARREN: How stupid can a minister be?

MR. NEARY: It is a bill to amend the Department of Education Act.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman says, "Show me an example in the bill. Show me an example where we are whittling away at authority." Well, Mr. Speaker, in the area of denominational colleges, section 41, 47, of the present school act have been removed -

MS. VERGE: We are not debating that.

MR. NEARY: I understand. If the only minister would only listen. In the proposed act I said.

MS. VERGE: Well, we will debate that when it is presented to the House.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister must realize that we have a wide-ranging debate under an act of this nature brought into the House, and I am placing the minister under notice and giving the minister warning that unless these things are removed from her proposed act, then there is going to be an awful controversy; there is an awful controversy brewing in this Province, Mr. Speaker. The right to operate colleges was the right in law in 1949. It was, of course, included in the 1968/69 revision of our educational legislation, Mr. Speaker. "It would be impossible for us" they say "to accept the proposed act unless legislation relating to colleges was introduced simultaneously with the new Schools Act."

So, Mr. Speaker, what I am saying in effect, reading this report and looking at the wording of this bill, and the general attitude of the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge), the tone of her statements inside and outside of this House, that what is happening is, and let us realize this when we vote for this bill, that the minister is taking the infant steps, the baby steps towards the abolishing of the denominational system of education in this Province. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like again to remind the hon. minister that there are people watching these moves in high places.

MR. STAGG: Nice moves.

MR. NEARY: Nice moves.

MS. VERGE: What moves we might behold.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, maybe the hon. minister wants her political life to be short-lived, I do not know. I do not know what ambitions the hon. minister has, but, Mr. Speaker, the hon. -

MR. WARREN: She is running scared.

MR. NEARY: - minister will trigger, if she carries out this diabolical plot, will trigger one of the greatest controversies in Newfoundland's whole history. Now, maybe that is what the hon. minister wants to do, and maybe, Mr. Speaker, maybe I am misreading the hon. minister.

MR. STAGG: Yes, you are.

MR. NEARY: Yes, maybe the hon. minister would like to create, stimulate, motivate, debate amongst the people to get their reaction, to get the reaction of the hotline and so forth, and then proceed to bring a bill into this House to complement the bill we have here today and all the others that will be brought in, before this session ends, or before the new session of the House ends, Mr. Speaker, to do away with the denominational system of education, to do something that the administration does not have the courage to do man fashion, and that is to ask for an amendment to the Terms of Union.

MS. VERGE: I will never do anything man fashion.

MR. NEARY: No, and the hon. minister will probably never do anything lady fashion either.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. TOBIN: That really shot you down.

MR. NEARY: Yes, that really shook me.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes it is not for the want of a tongue that we do not reply to the hon. minister. Mr. Speaker, I will let that one slide.

MS. VERGE: It is wise.

MR. NEARY: Yes, it is wise. I will be kind to the hon. minister.

MR. TOBIN: I guess you got shot down.

MR. NEARY: Just the same as the hon. gentleman is getting shot down down in Burin-Placentia, with every day that passes, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): On a point of order, the hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: The bill is the Department of Education Act. You know, we are not interested in listening to the hon. gentleman's impressions of the way in which the hon. capable member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) is carrying out his duties. It has nothing to do with the bill at all. I suggest the hon. gentleman confine himself to the principle of the bill.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that my colleague for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) - does Your Honour want to rule on that point of order?

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order. That was a difference of opinion between two hon. members.

MR. NEARY: Thank you Your Honour.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I hope when the hon. minister stands in her place to close second reading of this bill that the hon. minister will not get snarky, will not pretend that she is a know-all on this matter, and say the hon. Leader of the Opposition was talking about other bills but the one here does not deal with these matters, Mr. Speaker. What I am saying is, you have to relate this bill to other bills and to the general attitude and the general tone and the general thinking of the

MR. NEARY: minister and the administration,
that is what I am saying.

I understand perfectly well,
Mr. Speaker, that there are revisions being made to the Schools
Act, I understand that. And I do not need the hon. minister
to get up and remind me of that.

MS. VERGE: There is a new school Meadows.

MR. CALLAN: There is a new school of
thought about this government, too.

MR. NEARY: There is a new school of
thought every day, with every day that passes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY:

And I know that the minister will twist and turn and squirm, Mr. Speaker, because the hon. minister is still smarting under the vicious onslaught that is being made behind the scenes undermining the credibility of this minister, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WARREN: What about the big statement she made before she went to London and came back and could not deal with it?

MR. NEARY: Yes, and the one the minister made here 'Verge Blasts News Over School Act Story Claiming Political Motives.'

MS. VERGE: It was not in the News.

MR. NEARY: How lovely, how lovely
Mr. Speaker.

And so, Sir, Mr. Speaker -

MR. TOBIN: My son, you are making a fool
of yourself, sit down.

MR. CALLAN: You do not have to stand up
to do that.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman can sit down in somebody else's seat and make a fool of himself every day in this House. Sometimes as high as thirty-five times a day he has had to be brought to order by the Speaker of the House.

MR. DAVE: If I told you once I have told you a million times, do not exaggerate.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, no more than I would exaggerate about an overpass that is built -

MR. DAVE: I thought we would go through a full day without that being mentioned.

MR. NEARY: Listen to this. The overpass in Glovertown was meant to be an overpass in Gambo. The hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, has to be the Newfie joke of the century; the hon. gentleman put the wrong overpass in

MR. NEARY: Glovertown. He had plans designed for an overpass in Gambo and ended up building it in Glovertown.

MR. DINN: How foolish are you?

MR. WARREN: Well, why does he not table the engineering reports?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman if he wishes to deny it he has an opportunity every day in this House to deny it and bring in the documents, bring in the information -

MR. DAWE: And you have a Question Period in which to ask such questions.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, is this relevant?

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker. For the first time the hon. gentleman is right, it does not have any relevance but Your Honour must realize that I have been rudely interrupted by the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe). Last week I went down through the hon. gentleman's district and saw cars and trucks bottom up on slippery roads down there because the hon. gentleman was not paying attention, not only to the Trans-Canada Highway but in his own district. From Stephenville down to South Branch, Mr. Speaker, cars skidding off the road everywhere and not a sander or a snow plough in sight.

MR. TOBIN: You should try to talk about your own district then the minister would take care of his.

MR. NEARY: That is where I was headed for.

MR. TOBIN: The Minister of Transportation can take care of his.

MR. NEARY: That is where I was headed for but I had a job to get there.

AN HON. MEMBER: You are getting off track.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I know I am getting a little off track there and Your Honour is looking at me a rather askance there, but I want to come back to education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder that that crowd over there are looking frightened and scared these days? They cannot go outside of the building or look people straight in the eye, they will not allow people to come into their offices, they have a closed-door policy, and I realize it is irrelevant, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TOBIN:

Is it true that your party advised that your presence not be (inaudible)?

MR. NEARY:

You cannot get the Premier to sit in the House long enough to enter into the debates in here.

MR. TOBIN:

Is it true they told you not to show up?

MR. NEARY:

You know, Mr. Speaker, there is only a certain amount of this that should be tolerated by the Chair. There is only a certain amount of ignorance that you can tolerate, Mr. Speaker, and then you have to either discipline the member or send him out to take the Dale Carnegie Course, and I believe there are a number over there who could use the Dale Carnegie Course, a course in courtesy, public speaking, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TOBIN:

Garfield took that.

MR. NEARY:

So, Mr. Speaker, there is only a certain amount of this ignorance that you can take in this House.

MR. NEARY: But, anyway, coming back to the bill, I do not want the minister to stand up and say, "Well, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) was off track, he did not know what he was talking about. We were not talking about this bill at all. It is other bills and other changes and other things that we are talking about." Mr. Speaker, let me give you fair warning, and give members of this House fair warning, that if the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) continues on the path that she is on, the hon. minister is going to trigger one of the greatest controversies in Newfoundland's history.

MR. WARREN: The downfall of the party.

MR. NEARY: No, I would not go so far as to say that. I am prepared to debate the matter in this House.

MS. VERGE: But you are not prepared to take a stand now?

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to take a stand, yes, but I have not seen the bill, these other bills, the other amendments. And I have a feeling that the minister may back down on some of these changes that are being made. I have a feeling that the minister might back down. Because there are people there opposite who have a little common sense, who know that there is a procedure you go through to change constitutional matters, there is a procedure. You do not do it publicly. It is done through peaceful negotiations. It is done through meaningful discussions with the various parties involved. And the minister may think she is a law onto herself as a lot of other ministers over there think, they are going to give themselves now the authority to enter into contracts and make appointments and you would not put half that crowd over there in charge of a bull's-eye shop.

MR. BAIRD: You could put all the crowd over there in a telephone booth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY:

That is another matter for another day, Mr. Speaker.

I do not think there is anything else I can say about this bill, Mr. Speaker. My colleagues may wish to have a few words on the bill. I have no doubt but they will. They are very well aware of the devious plot, the diabolical plot on the part of the minister to keep chipping away, to keep whittling away, to keep taking away the authority, take away the authority a little bit at a time, a little bit here, a little bit there, and the next thing you know the minister has her own little empire and in full command.

MR. TOBIN:

She is a good minister.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman should hear some of the comments that I hear, and some of the representations I have about the running of that department, Mr. Speaker, and the attitude and the policy of the hon. minister.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will be interested in hearing what my colleagues have to say on this matter. As I say, the hon. minister can get up, the hon. minister can twist and turn and squirm like a worm and say, 'Well, the hon. gentleman did not know what he was talking about'.

MR. DAWE: Hear, hear.

MR. NEARY: 'The hon. gentleman was talking about something different. The hon. gentleman did not address himself to the bill.' I can hear it now, I can hear it all now, Mr. Speaker. And then just like trained seals over there, as they do every day, they will pound on their desks like trained seals and try to prop up the minister whose credibility is just about gone, nil, zilch, in the circles that count.

MR. TOBIN: What circles?

MR. NEARY: Ah, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CALLAN: You will remember,

MR. NEARY: The teachers will remember.

MS. VERGE: What circles count? Are some people more important than others?

MR. NEARY: The circles that do not count are the circles in which the member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin), for instance, would move. That circle does not count.

MR. TOBIN: Well, I will tell you something now, I had six times the majority you had.

MR. NEARY: Or the member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter). I mean, who would want any part of it, you know, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the Catholic Education Council says, 'That while the educational legislation of Newfoundland has always strongly reflected the denominational basis of our school system, the proposed act appears to be more compatible' - listen to this, Mr. Speaker, listen to this. I hope the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) is listening. 'While the educational legislation of Newfoundland has always strongly reflected the denominational basis of our school system, the proposed act appears to be more compatible with a public school system with emphasis on state control.'

MS. VERGE: Which proposed act?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister sits there trying to take advice to get propped up. Let me read it again and then we will see if the minister understands.

MS. VERGE: We are not debating that.

MR. NEARY: 'While the educational legislation

MR. NEARY:

of Newfoundland has strongly reflected the denominational basis of our school system, the proposed act -

MS VERGE: Which proposed act?

MR. NEARY: The School's Act.

MS VERGE: Who is proposing it?

MR. NEARY: The hon. minister.

MS VERGE: Am I proposing

that?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister has already had discussions with the denominations about it. Is that true or false?

MS VERGE: The proposal was made by a committee comprising the denominations and others. I am not on that committee.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am reading from the annual report of the Catholic Education Council. The hon. minister cannot deny that discussions have not been held to revise the School Act. That is right and the hon. minister cannot deny -

MS VERGE: But that is a different act.

MR. NEARY: I realize it is a different act but, Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister cannot deny that there has been severe criticism of the department and especially the minister for her lack of co-operation, for her arbitrary decisions in proceeding with amendments of this nature. The hon. minister cannot deny that.

MS VERGE: Yes, I can.

MR. NEARY: Do I have to bring the correspondence and lay it on the table of the House?

MR. DAWE: Could you bring it in please?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Do it. Yes, do it.

MR. NEARY: The hon. minister cannot deny it.

MS VERGE: Yes, I can.

MR. NEARY: No, the hon. minister cannot. Has the hon. minister read this report? "A CEC sub-committee"- listen to this , Mr. Speaker -"A CEC sub-committee was subsequently appointed to make a thorough study of the proposed"- now do I have to go back over it again? -"proposed legislation and the sub-committee's report was presented to the Winter meeting of the CEC on February 22nd."

MR. TOBIN: Whose proposal?

MS VERGE: Whose proposal?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, are the hon. gentlemen listening? The annual report of the Catholic Education Council.

MR. DAWE: Oh, their proposal.

MR. NEARY: "One of the major concerns expressed in the report is that under the new act it would certainly appear that the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) is in power to exercise broad, regulatory powers in establishing , organizing and administering schools areas which are by and large the responsibility of school boards under the present act." Can the hon. minister deny that? No. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe I quoted this section before."The report also noted that all references to denominational colleges , section 41-47 of the present act, have been removed from the proposed legislation. Now, listen, Mr. Speaker, the minister is denying any knowledge of this, alright? Is that what my hon friend interprets from the minister , denying any knowlege of it?

MS. VERGE: No.

MR. NEARY: Oh, the minister is now admitting because, Mr. Speaker, I am gradually boxing her into a corner.

MR. DAWE: The worm turns.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, listen to this. "In early May" -

MR. DAWE: If at first you do not succeed ...

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, there is only a certain amount of ignorance that can be tolerated in the House.

MR. DAWE: If that were the case, the hon. member would not be in the House.

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. McNicholas): I think there has been a certain amount.

MR. NEARY: "In early May a detailed submission outlining our response to the proposed act was made to the Minister of Education and this submission was also shared" -

MS VERGE: Who made the proposal?

MR. NEARY: Oh, God, Mr. Speaker, the CEC.

MR. TOBIN: You said the minister did, a minute ago.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, let me finish. "In early May a detailed submission outlining our response to the proposed act was made to the Minister of Education and this submission

MR. NEARY: was also shared with officials of the Integrated and Pentecostal Education Councils who no doubt share some of our concerns with reference to this proposed legislation. This is the first major revision of the Schools Act since the legislation of 1968 - 1969, and considerable time and thought will have to be given to the proposed act, one which will have a very great influence on the direction of education in the Province during the coming decades."

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the hon. the minister has not even read that report, that submission that was made. The hon. the minister has not read it. She seems to be very unfamiliar, uncertain of herself in this House. Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate and it is tragic and I regret to have to say that as a result, education in this Province is suffering badly.

DR. COLLINS: The greatest Minister of Education since Confederation, I heard someone say the other day.

MR. NEARY: The teachers will remember. The teachers will remember, Mr. Speaker.

With regard to school board financial difficulties -

MR. TOBIN: I do not think it is right for the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) to have to represent two districts, his own and LaPoile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, Your Honour, of course, realizes that these members who are over there day in and day out displaying their ignorance are lowering the decorum of this House.

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

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if hon. gentlemen there opposite think they are in a beer garden

MR. NEARY: somewhere? Are they aware they are in the people's House? Ignorance of the rules of this House is no excuse, Mr. Speaker, for their behaviour.

MR. TOBIN: Do you know the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) is looking after your district?

MR. NEARY: Could I have silence there, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
That is about ten times now.

School board financial difficulties - in connection with this matter, Mr. Speaker, the financial problems - this is according to the report that I have here - "The financial problems of our school boards have been aggravated this year by the mandatory expenditure of their 10 per cent share of construction costs related to the Reorganized High School programme."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Could we have silence, Mr. Speaker?

"Collectively our boards had to spend about \$736,000 whether they could afford it or not, and most of them could not. This problem occurred at the time that increased operating costs claimed the greatest share of school tax revenue. Consequently, some of our boards now find themselves in a strained financial condition with no opportunity to overcome existing deficits" -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, could we have silence on the other side, please?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I do feel that some members have been provoked but when the hon. member asks for silence

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. McNicholas): he is entitled to it.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

"Consequently, some of
our boards now find themselves in a strained financial
condition with no opportunity to overcome existing deficits

MR. NEARY:

because of ever-increasing operating costs. More than ever the attention and surveillance of Board Finance Committees is needed on an ongoing basis so that our schools can operate in an efficient and cost-conscious manner."

Mr. Speaker, these quotes, these paragraphs that I read from this report this afternoon are very, very damaging indeed. These are harsh words. And the minister can stand in her place now and ridicule the Opposition and me, personally, and tell us we do not know what we are talking about. We are very familiar with the procedure of this House. We know when we have a bill that we can have a broad-ranging debate on. This is the earliest opportunity and the first opportunity this session that I have had, or members on this side have had to raise these matters. And we intend to raise them every opportunity, Mr. Speaker. Your Honour would rule, if we brought in Standing Order 23 on an emergency debate, that we would have ample opportunity under legislation and other times under the rules of the House to debate these matter, so we are exercising our right and our prerogative today and we do not need a lecture from the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge). The Minister of Education would do well to address herself to the problems that I just raised, Mr. Speaker. And the minister would be well-advised to tell us, to inform us and indeed to inform the school boards, and the denominational committees what is to be done to alleviate some of these problems that are undermining our whole educational system. An awful lot of damage is being done by that minister, Mr. Speaker, to our educational system. And if the minister goes ahead with her plot, her plan, to put the authority for the full running of the educational system in this Province in the

MR. NEARY: hands of the minister and in the hands of the bureaucrats, Mr. Speaker, then I submit that would be unconstitutional. If the minister wants a debate on state operated schools versus the denominational system of education, let us have it. That is what I would say, let us have that debate. Bring it on, let the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) bring it on.

MR. MARSHALL: Who protected the denominational system in the Constitution? Who got it into the Constitution?

MR. NEARY: Now, that is a good question. Who protected the denominational system of education in the Constitution, in the Terms of Union? Who protected the denominational system of education in this Province under the Terms of Union? I believe it was one gentleman by the name of Joey Smallwood -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: - who headed a Liberal regime in this Province for twenty-three years and would not tolerate for one second any downgrading of a matter that is constitutional. Now, mind you, Mr. Speaker, we can change the Terms of Union, we can change them if that is what the House wants, but let us not be so low and sneaky as to chip away, whittle away, at the system as the minister is doing. Let the hon. minister have the courage of her convictions and stand now in this House when I am finished and instead of heaping abuse and scorn and ridicule on me and the members of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, for not knowing what

MR. NEARY:

we are talking about, let the minister stand and tell the House where the minister stands on the denominational system of education versus the state controlled education.

MS. VERGE: Where do you stand?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am not in a decision-making role, the minister is.

MS. VERGE: No stand! That is shocking!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I challenge the minister now, here today, I challenge the minister in debate - I would love to challenge the minister outside of debate - but in debate and in this House, within the realms of the rules of this House, I challenge the minister to put her future as minister of that department on the line. Lay it on the line. Do not be cowardly about it.

MR. TOBIN: What are you saying?

MR. NEARY: What I am saying is this, let the minister when she stands, instead of -

MR. HOUSE: Is that relevant to this debate?

MR. NEARY: Yes, it is relevant - instead of heaping scorn and ridicule and being silly and childish, that the Leader of the Opposition wandered all over the countryside, did not know what he was talking about, let the minister rise in her place shortly, when my colleagues have made their points, and let the minister state in simple terms, in parliamentary language, let the minister state -

MR. BAIRD: Let the Opposition know their place.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to be heard in silence.

MR. SPEAKER (AYLWARD): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Let the minister state beyond any shadow of doubt where the minister stands on the denominational system of education versus state schools.

MS. VERGE: Where do you stand?

MR. WARREN: You are the minister.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. minister would make that statement today, shortly thereafter I will tell the minister where I stand. But I am not the Minister of Education and I am not in a decision-making capacity. If I were, I would not hesitate. I would like to hear where the minister stands, because it is very important to the people out there to hear the minister make a statement to reassure them that their constitutional right will be upheld or it will be amended in the proper way, and not sneak around under cover of darkness, Mr. Speaker, not hold secret meetings in the back rooms of Confederation Building and chip away and whittle away at the system and get everybody upset. That does not accomplish anything. All that does is destroy the morale and the continuity of the system, Mr. Speaker. That is all that does. So I am glad to have the opportunity under this bill, Mr. Speaker,

MR. NEARY: even though, I suppose, the Minister of Health (Mr. House) may think it is irrelevant, it is about as irrelevant now as he is to Health, totally irrelevant. The hon. gentleman is totally irrelevant to the health care programme in this Province.

MR. HOUSE: If you are ashamed of the health care, you are wrong.

MR. NEARY: Okay, Mr. Speaker, let us say that it is irrelevant, and it is not, but let us say that it is and it is not -

MR. HOUSE: Yes, it is.

MR. NEARY: - I am delighted, Mr. Speaker, under this bill to have the opportunity to raise these matters that have been bothering the educators and the people in this Province for a long, long time. And I am afraid that people in high places are starting to hit back, if what I heard in the last week is any indication.

MS. VERGE: What did you hear?

MR. NEARY: If the minister wants to discuss it with me in private I would be glad to inform the minister.

MR. DAWE: I would not take that chance.

MR. BAIRD: Not unless you were behind bars.

MR. DAWE: Make sure you have a chaperone.

MR. WARREN: I do not think the minister would need a chaperone at all, she can take care of herself.

MR. NEARY: No wonder the hon. gentleman would blush.

MR. DAWE: This is my natural colour.

MR. NEARY: Yes, that is his natural colour.

No wonder he would blush, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: You know, I heard the Premier the other day in this House, I believe it was yesterday during Question Period, say that when the Opposition cannot get at the root of the problem they resort to little personal snide remarks.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Premier should get Hansard today.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please! A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. member has, because he is Leader of the Opposition, has one hour to debate a bill and, you know, he is obviously not being relevant. The matter before this House is the principle of the bill to amend the Education Act, and the hon. gentleman has been straying for the whole time. I suppose he has spoken for about two minutes on the point and, I think the time of the House should not be consumed by the hon. gentleman's irrelevancies and irrationalities.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! To that point of order I would like to remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) that we are doing An Act To Amend The Education Act, Bill No. 5, I would ask him to have his remarks relate to that bill.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have four minutes left; I do not think I will need the four minutes to wind up my few remarks except that I would once again like to issue an invitation, not a challenge probably, an invitation to the hon. minister to state categorically in this House where the minister and the administration stands on the denominational system of education versus state operated schools. It is a very simple request. There are an awful lot of people in this Province who would be interested in the answer. If we do not get the answer, Mr. Speaker, then we can only assume

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MR. NEARY: that the minister is proceeding
with her diabolical plot to do away with the denominational
system of education in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Baie Verte-White Bay.

The hon. the member for

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that after that diatribe of nonsense, mostly irrelevancies, that we cannot afford to have another speaker from the opposite side without somebody from this side getting up to say a few words on this particular bill. I mean, the sneaky, low-down way that the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), Mr. Speaker, attempts to get on in his favourite, headline hunter way, attempting to attract the eyes and ears of the media so that tomorrow in glossy detail in The Daily News or tonight on CBC or the other media he can have his headline: 'The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador wishes to abolish denominational education.' That was the only intention, that was the only design, that was the only attitude of the hon. gentleman who just took up an hour of the time of this House saying nothing. That was the only desire. And that, Mr. Speaker, in my mind, calls into question the responsibility that members of this House have for what they say. Because there is absolutely nothing -

MR. NEARY:

Speaker.

On a point of order, Mr.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon.

Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I believe one of the principle rules of this House is that no member can attribute motives -

MR. RIDEOUT:

That is right.

MR. NEARY:

- to remarks of another member as the hon. gentleman just did, Mr. Speaker. I would submit the hon. gentleman is completely out of order and I would ask the Chair to ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw these remarks.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): To that point of order,
the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: If the hon. gentleman wants
to quote authorities he will find that you are not allowed to
attribute base motives.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: There was nothing base about it.

MR. MARSHALL: There was nothing base about
what the hon. gentleman was saying. As a matter of fact, what
the hon. gentleman was saying was basic. The hon. gentleman
Mr. Speaker, was addressing himself to the nature and the
import of what the hon. gentleman was saying. The hon.
gentleman is debating what the hon. gentleman talked about
for one hour and his imputation, which was a definite imputation
and a false imputation, an incorrect one, that this government
was attempting to change the denominational education system
in this Province.

So let there be no doubt about
it, you cannot attribute base motives. There is no reason in
this world why somebody cannot get up and attribute a motive
and say the reason why somebody was speaking was because he
wished to do something as long as it was not base. But in
effect what the hon. gentleman was doing is he was analyzing
what the hon. gentleman was talking about and it is quite
permissible, and it is perfectly permissible for him to so do.

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon.
gentleman again is completely wrong. What the member for Baie
Verte did was he questioned my motives, Mr. Speaker, and the

MR. NEARY:

hon. Government House Leader

(Mr. Marshall) knows that is wrong. They can disagree with me. They can say what I said was not true or they can disagree with it, but they cannot attribute motives to what I said, Mr. Speaker. And the hon. gentleman has broken one of the

MR. NEARY:

principle rules of this House and I would ask that Your Honour ask the hon. member to retract what he said, otherwise we will have a free-for-all.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please!

To that point of order, I was listening to the debate on both sides and I rule that there is merely a difference of opinion between two hon. members.

MR. NEARY: You cannot attribute motives to what a member says.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not permissible.
The hon. the member for Baie Verte -- White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
You know, talk about attributing motives to members in this House, all of us here, collectively, are members that form a government. What more motives were attributed to anybody than the announcements that came from the hon. gentleman a couple of minutes before he took his seat, that this government, those of us who make up this government, this administration, were out to scuttle the denominational educational system in this Province? What is any more basic, or base, or bias - whatever the word is - than having that kind of motive attributed to us as a collective group of people who form the administration of this Province? That is the kind of motive, Mr. Speaker, that I am trying to talk about and lay the record straight, as I see it, as one member who supports this administration in this House. The hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, must have a short memory. I do not think the people of this Province have such short memories, but the hon. gentleman must have a short memory. Who was it that raised a hullabaloo from one end of this Province to the other, from one end of this

MR. RIDEOUT: country to the other when the great party that the hon. gentleman supports was attempting to allow a Constitutional out to scuttle the denominational education system if somebody wanted to do it? It was there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: Who took up the torch when it was needed, Mr. Speaker? Was it the hon. gentleman and his colleagues? Was it the great Liberal part in Ottawa and their great colleagues?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. RIDEOUT: Was it the Denominational Education Committees in this Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. RIDEOUT: Was it many of the church leaders in this Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. RIDEOUT: No, Mr. Speaker, it was this government, this administration led by the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: That is who made it an issue. And there were those people out there in the Province who said, 'You are playing on people's emotions. You are trying to get people psyched up; much ado about nothing. You are trying to get people worked up about nothing. There was no danger that under the Constitutional proposals put forward by the federal Liberal government that we could lose our denominational Constitutional rights. That could never happen'. But Mr. Speaker, we persisted, we knew we were right, and finally the church leaders saw we were right, the education boards saw we were right and after many meetings they came around and supported us and they stood with us in the cause to make sure that the loopholes that were in that original Constitutional document were closed so that there could

MR. RIDEOUT: never, there could never be any question about denominational education in this Province unless this Legislature and the Parliament of Canada wanted to do something about it. That is what happened. And who led that fight, Mr. Speaker? It was not the hon. gentleman on the other side of the House who likes to get up now and pontificate, who likes to stand on the throne of justice

MR. RIDEOUT: and have us believe that he was the one who stood up for the safeguarding of the rights of denominational education in this Province. And that story, Mr. Speaker, must always be told by those of us on this side of the House and supporters of this party, because it was this party and this government that fought the fight. It was no other political organization in this Province that fought that fight, it was the leader of this party and this party only. And let none of us ever forget that and certainly, God, let none of us ever have bad mouths and long faces because of that.

He talks, Mr. Speaker, about the thinking and tone of this administration when it comes to denominational education. Do I have to say anymore about the thinking and the tone of this administration when it comes to denominational education? We fought the battle out there among the general public when a lot of people did not believe we were right. We fought the battle out there when a lot of people were saying we were silly.

MR. DAWE: The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) said that.

MR. RIDEOUT: I know the Leader of the Opposition said it. There were many, many people who were supporters of that party who said it, thought we were fabricating, our imaginations were gone wild. But after the documents were printed, Mr. Speaker, and we could sit down across the table and show them where they could do away with denominational education rights in this Province without our agreement, they soon saw who was right. They soon saw who had their homework done. And it was the fight that was carried on by this administration that has now closed that forevermore unless we consent to having that constitutional document opened.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Speaker, what are we talking about here in this bill, this bill that took an hour for the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) to stand up and make all kinds of wild accusations about this government and this minister and our intentions as far as denominational education goes? It is very simple, it is very brief, it is almost elementary, Dear Watson, what we are talking about. They are laid out very clearly in the explanatory notes. Clauses 1 and 4, look at the great changes, Mr. Speaker, look at the great constitutional changes that we are proposing in Clauses 1 and 4. Look at the great changes that we are proposing to erode denominational education in Newfoundland and Labrador in Clauses 1 and 4. What do Clauses 1 and 4 do, Mr. Speaker? The amendment would change the names of the Denominational Educational Committee and the Executive Secretaries to that of Denominational Educational Councils and Executive Directors. Well now, Mr. Speaker, that is a great erosion of denominational education authority and power in this Province. That is a great erosion of authority and church control and church principles that are so basic to our education system here that took the Leader of the Opposition an hour to tell us what crass individuals we were on this side of the House.

What are the other clauses in the bill doing? Clauses 2 and 3, let us have a look at the great changes and the great erosion of power that is taking place here. Those amendments would increase the number of assistant deputy ministers of education from two to three and make the necessary consequential changes to the existing law. What is the third assistant deputy minister supposed to be, Mr. Speaker? The assistant deputy minister in charge of getting rid of the denominational education system? That must be his role according to the

MR. RIDEOUT: Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary). It adds another assistant deputy minister, something that has been requested by the DECs, something that has been requested by the Federation of School Boards, something that has been requested by the departmental officials. That is another great erosion, Mr. Speaker, of the constitutional authority of the denominations in education in this Province.

Clause 5, what does that do to erode the authority? This amendment would provide for the appointment of a new senior advisory committee and make the necessary consequential changes to the existing laws. And who is represented on that Committee, Mr. Speaker? None other than the newly named Denominational Education Councils that we just talked about, another great erosion of the church's responsibility in education in this Province.

Clause 6, the final one that we will

MR. RIDEOUT:

look at here, Mr. Speaker, what does that do to raise the fears of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary). Clause (6) "This amendment would, in the Acts listed in the Schedule, re-style the several Denominational Education Committees as Denominational Education Councils and change the title of the Executive Secretary of a Committee to that of Executive Director?"

Now, here are all the great constitutional changes, and all the great erosion of authority that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) took a full hour to tell the House about, and took a full hour to try to implant in the minds of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, through the reporting of this House, that this government, and this administration, is out hell bent for leather on one avenue and one street only and that is to abolish denominational education in Newfoundland and replace it with state education. These are the words that he used himself, denominational education replaced by state education.

Mr. Speaker, again I say the responsibility of members for what they say in this House sometimes I think is very lacking, because, you know, anything can be reported, whatever we say can be reported, and it can be taken in some quarters to be the gospel and there could be nothing further from the truth. And like I said in the beginning, let none of us in this party or in this government ever hang our heads or have long faces about who defended the rights of the churches in education in this Province when they needed to be defended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: And that was a year and a half or two years ago when that right was then eroded not by this Province, Mr. Speaker, but by the great party that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) proposes to support.

There is just one other thing that perhaps I should mention, Mr. Speaker. I noticed the Leader of the Opposition, a few times in his remarks today, used to rise to the mention of the name of Mr. Noseworthy. I noticed there used to be sort of a chilling grin come over his face because perhaps the Leader of the Opposition's job, Mr. Speaker, might be in jeopardy if there is any truth to the reports that have been carried in the media this last day or so with regard to the possible intentions of Mr. Noseworthy, And I would not mention it except that it has been carried in the public press so, therefore, it is a public matter. One thing should be kept in the minds of all of us, Mr. Speaker; I heard the Leader of the Opposition saying today from time to time that the teachers will remember. I am sure they will, Mr. Speaker. If there is any basis in fact to the reports that have been carried this last day or so regarding the proposed political activities of Mr. Noseworthy, the teachers of this Province will indeed remember. They will remember.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: They will remember. And it does not take teachers, Mr. Speaker, very long to put two and two together. And they will remember about the great political campaign that took place in this Province last year, because you could not call it anything else except a political campaign, and who led that political campaign and whose political ambitions are now being talked about. So if there is any truth to the reports that we have seen the last day or so, I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition is in fact very, very correct, the teachers

MR. RIDEOUT: will remember.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, the trend today, I think, is to try and be as irrelevant as possible and, of course, that was rather evident, I believe, especially in the concluding remarks of the member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout).

Mr. Speaker, I believe the last time that I saw the member for Baie Verte-White Bay so eloquent was when he was on this side of the Legislature, blasting the same government that now, of course, he is a part of. Talking about opportunistic people, Mr. Speaker, like Mr. Noseworthy and the political campaign that he waged last Spring, who, of course, can be pointed at

MR. CALLAN: more directly and be accused of being opportunistic, Mr. Speaker, than the member for Bay Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) who decided, for political reasons and for his own opportunistic desires, to leave a Party as, of course, people like John Crosbie and the Premier himself have done at other times?

Mr. Speaker, if Mr. Noseworthy plans to run for the leadership of the Liberal Party, I do not know and do not really care. And I do not imagine that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is too concerned about it either, contrary to what the member for Bay Verte - White Bay just finished saying.

MR. BAIRD: You are the one who pointed the finger.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, my colleague on the Committee for Elections and Controverted Elections and Election Financing I do not expect him to be insulting me as he does the Leader of the Opposition whenever he stands because we have spent some interesting times together since we have served on the committee, which committee, of course, will be reporting to this Legislature before too long, I think.

MR. DAWE: Will you get on to the bill.

MR. CALLAN: No, the trend today, Mr. Speaker is to try and avoid any comments and any discussion on the bill which is before the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CALLAN: Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Bay Verte - White Bay gave us the various clauses, and he refers to the explanatory notes, of course, and the member for Bay Verte - White Bay assures us that there is nothing hideous or untoward, the Minister of Education (Ms.

MR. CALLAN: Verge) is not trying to squeeze something in through the back door that she should be bringing in through the front door and so on. And he assures us that the only purpose for this bill is to change a couple of names, you change from 'committee' to 'council' and, of course, to add another or two extra deputy ministers in the Department of Education.

MS. VERGE: One extra.

MR. CALLAN: One extra. That is what the hon. member for Bay Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) tells us is the real reason behind this bill. Well, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, it is, perhaps that is true, but I do not blame the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) for being rather suspicious because we have seen stranger things happen. In the last election, Mr. Speaker, we saw the Premier, who leads

MR. CALLAN:

this government, this party opposite, assure the people of this Province that we have gone to court. Why have we gone to court? "Because I assure you that we have a case that is based on the firmest foundation. We will not lose the offshore dispute in the courts." Nothing, Mr. Speaker, could have been further from the truth. It was a colossal bluff that the Premier pulled on the people of this Province and unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, 61 per cent of the people believed him; 35 per cent, the Liberals, did not believe him and, of course, the other 4 per cent, the NDPers, did not. But, unfortunately, 61 per cent of the people believed the Premier. But, Mr. Speaker, while I do not blame the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), as I say, for being suspicious of not only this bill, I think he is laying the blame, Mr. Speaker, probably at the feet of the wrong person because, as I have said in this House on other occasions when I have talked about the lack of water and sewer projects for places in my district, I do not blame the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook) any more than I blame the Minister of Education (Ms Verge), you know, because I think that they are manipulated and they are told what to do in their various departments.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) assures us that these explanatory notes and the clauses referred to on the inside cover of this bill is what the bill is all about. I will not repeat, Mr. Speaker, what the Leader of the Opposition has already said -

MR. BAIRD:

What did he say?

MR. CALLAN:

- in an hour, and I remind you it took him an hour to say it.

MR. HOUSE: He could have said it all in five minutes.

MR. CALLAN: I will not take five minutes either, Mr. Speaker. All I say again is that I hope that this administration, the government of this Province, Mr. Speaker, is not as devious as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) thinks they are. I hope that it is not the intention of this government to try to erode and erase and take away the privileges that educators, and, of course, the denominations, have enjoyed in this Province since day one.

MS VERGE: Can you not tell if that is in the bill or not? Can you not read it for yourself?

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education says, 'Can you not read it?' Of course I can read this one. But the Leader of the Opposition says it is the first step. The Leader of the Opposition says this bill is just one of a number of bills and it is getting your foot in the door. I do not know if he used that expression or not, but the Leader of the Opposition is saying this bill is one in which the government are trying to get their foot in the door and it is the first step in the erosion process.

MR. RIDEOUT: He is not infallible, is he?

MR. CALLAN: Well, I do not know, nobody is infallible, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude my few remarks. I trust that the Minister of Education is doing what she says she is doing in this bill. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. McNicholas): If the hon. the minister speaks now she closes the debate.

MS VERGE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the opportunity to speak once again to clear up a lot of confusion that has been perpetrated through the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) and his colleague, the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan). As the member for Bellevue said himself, most of the remarks here this afternoon have been characterized by irrelevance to the bill that is at hand. Perhaps we could say irreverence and certainly considerable ignorance of the education system and of the contents of this bill.

The Leader of the Opposition repeatedly looked at the Speaker and sympathized with his having to tolerate ignorance. Of course, ignorance was reflected in his own remarks.

MS. VERGE: I myself had to put up with a considerable show of ignorance from his remarks. By the count of my colleague, the Minister of Health (Mr. House), the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) referred to me six times as an 'hon. gentleman.' He then went on to devote most of his remarks not to the bill, "An Act To Amend The Department Of Education Act", but instead to the annual report of the Catholic Education Council commenting on a proposal, from a source not known or named by the Leader of the Opposition, to amend the Schools Act, which is a different piece of legislation, a proposal which has not been endorsed by me, has not been endorsed by Cabinet, has never been brought forward in the form of a bill to this House of Assembly.

And then, Mr. Speaker, the most damning sign of ignorance of all was the failure of the Leader of the Opposition to tell the members of this hon. House his position, to enunciate the stand of the Liberal Party of Newfoundland on the education system of the Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition tried to stir up a hornet's nest, tried to manufacture a controversy by insinuating that some mysterious, dark, devious plot, being hatched down in the bowels of Confederation Building in the Department of Education, is going to undermine the rights of the churches in education in this Province. He did not explain how that could be done. He did not explain how this could happen through the contents of a bill at hand. But after trying to manufacture that controversy, after raising the issue of the system of education we enjoy in this Province, the Leader of the Opposition failed to tell everybody how he feels about the education system. Now, Mr. Speaker, I find it incredible that a man who is leading Her Majesty's Opposition, who is Acting Leader of the Liberal Party of Newfoundland, who used to

MS. VERGE: be a Cabinet minister does not take a stand on the system of education in this Province. I find that incredible.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleague the member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) has quite correctly stated, refreshing the very short-lived memory of the Opposition members, it was this administration, the people on the Government side of the House, who stood up for our present educational system, enshrining rights and powers to certain Christian denominations during the constitutional debate

MS.VERGE:

when that system was threatened by the proposal of the Prime Minister of Canada and the friends of the members opposite in the Liberal Party of Canada. Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn my attention to the content of the bill at hand, 'An Act To Amend The Department Of Education Act.' As I stated in my opening remarks, the bill has three provisions, the first of which accords with a request of the Denominational Education Committees to change the name of the Denominational Education Committees to Council and to change the name of their chief administrators to executive directors.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) to explain how this revolutionary proposal, how this amendment to the Department of Education Act can be the first step to undermining the rights and powers of the churches in education in this Province. I reiterate it is a change which was requested and initiated by the churches themselves.

The second provision of this bill, Mr. Speaker, is to give effect to current practice in the Department of Education of having three instead of two assistant deputy ministers, of having an assistant deputy minister responsible for primary, elementary and secondary education and to have another assistant deputy minister responsible for advanced and continuing education. This has been the practice for about the past two years and it has worked very well. It has received favourable commentary from the educators of the Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like the Leader of the Opposition to explain to me how this change, this revolutionary step of having not two but three assistant deputy ministers in the

MS. VERGE: Department of Education is a first step to taking away powers from the churches and shifting them to the Minister of Education.

The third provision of the bill, Mr. Speaker, is to establish a senior advisory committee to advise government, through the Minister of Education, on all matters of policy relating to advanced and continuing education, with the commission comprising a representative of the Denominational Education Councils. Now, Mr. Speaker, this idea has been endorsed by the churches, by the Denominational Education Committees. It was at their request that the bill provides for representation of the DECs. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) to tell me how this measure, the establishment of a senior advisory committee with representation from the churches, is a first step to changing the educational system of this Province. Of course, Mr. Speaker, he cannot explain himself because he was not serious in advancing his insinuations that somehow this bill is a first step to undermining our Denominational Education system.

As my colleague from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) stated, all the Leader of the Opposition was trying to do was make a sensation so that he would be featured in tomorrow's headlines.

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

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

MR. NEARY: Your Honour knows that one of the principal rules of this House is you cannot attribute motives to a member's remarks. That is twice this

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL):

Order, please!

To that point of order, it is certainly the interpretation of the Chair that the hon. Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) was not impugning base motives to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary). At the most it is a difference of opinion as to what was said earlier by the Leader of the Opposition and what was then said by the Minister of Education.

The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have something of a confession to make. Actually officials of the Department of Education and I, as minister, have been deliberating on a constitutional change in our educational system. Now, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Leader of the Opposition, as is his wont, has gotten wind of this proposed change. Perhaps the word plot could be applied to the present deliberations. And, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the plan that is underway has elicited the adjective diabolical from the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition was not clear in referring to the steps being taken to change the denominational education system. Now, Mr. Speaker, the change that is being contemplated by this administration, and in fact has been endorsed by this administration, is an amendment to the Constitution of Canada to give to the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland the same rights and powers in education as have been enjoyed through constitutional provision by the Roman Catholic denomination, the Anglican denomination, the Moravian, Presbyterian, Salvation Army and United Church denominations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would like to explain whether it is this proposal that deserves the

MS. VERGE: the label 'diabolical'.

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

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

MR. NEARY: Let me remind the minister that it was the Liberal Administration that put forward that proposal several years ago.

MS. VERGE: Why was it not consented to?

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister will have to ask the Parliament of Canada that. But it was passed in this House, sponsored by a Liberal Administration, Mr. Speaker. So the hon. minister cannot claim credit for that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!
To that point of order, it is certainly not a valid point of order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition obviously rose to clarify a certain point.

MS. VERGE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is this plot that the Leader of the Opposition is so upset about, the plot to succeed where the Opposition Leader's party failed so many years ago, to give the Penecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland the rights and privileges which that denomination deserves to give effect to the tremendous contribution to education made by the Penecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said before the Opposition Leader spent most of his time in this debate talking about the contents of the annual report of the Catholic Education Council on a proposal from an unnamed source to change the Schools Act. Mr. Speaker, I regret that the Opposition Leader

MS. VERGE: did not do his homework, did not find out the source of the proposal or the contents of the proposal. I would now like to enlighten him and other members of the House. Mr. Speaker, there is under the existing Department of Education Act provision for a General Advisory Council to advise government through the Minister of Education on all education policies. And by the legislation that General Advisory Council known as the GAC, comprises three representatives of the Denominational Education Committees as well as representatives of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, the Provincial Federation of School Boards, now known as the Provincial Association of School Trustees, the Faculty of Education of Memorial University and the Department of Education itself. It is chaired by the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, that committee has deliberated on the Schools Act and has decided that it is high time for that act to be tidied up. It is a lengthy, unwieldy piece of legislation that has been amended several times over the years and it is felt by the members of that committee, the DEC representatives included, that it is time to do some housecleaning to consolidate the act, to bring together all the bits and pieces, the original act and all the amendments that have been made in the years since, and to make it concise, to set it out in a logical and orderly fashion. And, Mr. Speaker, that General Advisory Committee delegated to a sub-committee, a smaller group, the task of going through the Schools Act and all the amendments and bringing back to the General Advisory Committee a proposal for improving the act. And, Mr. Speaker, the sub-committee in fact submitted a report

MS. VERGE: with a proposal, and it is this report and proposal that is the subject of the Catholic Education Council annual report.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the sub-committee had representation from the DECs. The General Advisory Council has representatives from the DECs, three representatives in fact, one from each of the Catholic Committee, the Integrated Committee and the Penecostal Committee. Mr. Speaker, after the sub-committee's report was submitted to the full committee, all the people involved have scrutinized it, have made their comments. Some expressed agreement with most of the provisions, others took issue with certain other provisions, other proposals, and that kind of process is still underway, debate and discussion and resolution. Mr. Speaker, that

MS. VERGE: in this Province are all affiliated with denominations. That is part of our denominational education system that perhaps the Opposition Leader (Mr. NEary) is not well informed about and, shockingly, he has not taken a stand on. But, Mr. Speaker, each of the school boards which employs teachers who work in the classrooms and in the central offices is affiliated with a denomination or a group of denominations. All our school boards are church school boards. All our schools are church schools which are totally publicly funded. That is the essence of our denominational education system which, I reiterate, I cannot believe the Opposition Leader has not taken a stand on. And I am not surprised he is not paying attention to my remarks now because he must be feeling very ashamed of himself for not indicating that he or his party have a position on the education system of the Province, something as basic and fundamental and important to the people of the Province as the education system. He does not have a stand on it. He does not have an opinion on it. He cannot tell us whether he agrees with the system. He cannot tell us whether he thinks the Christian denomination should continue to enjoy the rights and privileges they now have.

Mr. Speaker, the Federation of School Boards, the Provincial Association of School Trustees, which are all church affiliated, is a partner with the provincial government on the employer's side in negotiating with the Newfoundland Teachers' Association on behalf of the employees in arriving at collective agreements. Mr. Speaker, I can say, and I think I can speak for everyone on this side, especially my colleague,

MS. VERGE: process will be allowed to run its full course with every opportunity afforded the Denominational Education Committees and all the other education agencies before a proposal is brought by me to my colleagues in Cabinet.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am afraid the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) has failed, as The Daily News earlier failed, to stir up a controversy about the proposed amendments to the Schools Act since government has made no proposal and the only proposal in existence is one of a sub-committee of the General Advisory Committee which has representation from the Denominational Education Committees. It is all a very bureaucratic, I am afraid, mundane exercise that is not really worthy of controversy.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, in his rambling and among his irrelevancies, commented on the role of the Denominational Education Committees in negotiations for collective agreements with the Newfoundland Teachers' Association. Now, Mr. Speaker, there are two parties on the employer's side in those negotiations, who are the provincial government, through Treasury Board, and the Federation of School Boards, or the Provincial Association of School Trustees as they are now called, comprising the thirty-five school boards of the Province, and it is the school boards which are the employers of the teachers. Mr. Speaker, as I am sure you would know, perhaps the Leader of the Opposition does not know, the school boards

MS. VERGE: the President of Treasury Board (Dr. Collins), that we have enjoyed excellent co-operation with the Federation of School Boards in our joint effort to negotiate and put in place fair and equitable collective agreements which accord with the ability of the taxpayers of the Province and the position of the provincial government to pay, and which protect the interests of students who enjoy the privilege of a good educational system and good educational programmes.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition Leader (Mr. Neary) in his irrelevant remarks - I mean by irrelevant, irrelevant to the bill being debated - cast some aspersions on Grade XII and the reorganized high school programme. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that -

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

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

MR. NEARY: I was quoting from that report on the Catholic Education Council, quoting directly from the report. So the hon. minister is wrong again, Mr. Speaker. I did not personally cast any aspersions on Grade XII, the expanded high school system. I was quoting from a report and the hon. minister -

MS. VERGE: Did you table it?

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

MS. VERGE: Did you table the report?

MR. NEARY: No, I did not, I was

MR. NEARY: not asked, Mr. Speaker. If I was asked I would gladly table it. I do not have it here with me now, I lent it to somebody, but I would gladly table it. There is nothing in it to be ashamed of or to hide. And, Mr. Speaker, in due course, if the hon. minister wants me to, I will be glad to lay it on the Table of the House.

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!
The hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) has not raised a valid point of order. It is obviously a difference of opinion between two members as to what was said.

The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I think the facts are obvious to students and parents and teachers who are applauding the reorganized high school programme now that it has been fully phased in. Of course, the programme was introduced back in September of 1981 and we are now in the third year of that revised programme. The success is even beyond the expectation of the planners, Mr. Speaker. One important indicator is the retention rate. Over 90 per cent of the students who were in Grade XI, or level two, in June were back at school this September to finish the high school programme and become the first Grade XII graduates.

Mr. Speaker, in the Opposition Leader's own district, in the Port aux Basques Integrated School Board, over 100 per cent of the number of students who were in Grade XI last year are now in Grade XII, which is remarkable.

MR. NEARY: It is one of the best school boards in the Province.

MS. VERGE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the Opposition Leader (Mr. Neary) saying something positive about the educational system. Yes, I agree the Port aux Basques Integrated School Board is an excellent school board and it is one of many fine boards that are doing good work.

Mr. Speaker, to house the Grade XII students and to provide for so many of the new programmes that have been introduced, especially in small rural schools, this government has provided for about \$70 million worth of new school construction over the past four years, about \$25 million of which was devoted particularly to the reorganized high school programme. Mr. Speaker, my friend, the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow), presided at the opening of two new schools in his district last week and was able to comment that over the last four years there has been about \$5 million worth of new school construction in his district alone, in the Bay of Islands.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I would like to reiterate

MS. VERGE: that there are three provisions of this bill, all of which have been endorsed and approved by the churches which have rights and powers in education in this Province, the first of which was specifically requested by the churches having to do with changes in the names of the Denominational Education Committees and the Executive Secretaries of the committees to Denominational Education Councils and Executive Directors; the second of which having to do with the increase in the number of assistance deputy ministers of education from two to three; and the third of which having to do with the establishment of a senior advisory committee on post-secondary and adult education of which one member is a representative of the Denominational Education Committees.

As I said when I opened the debate, Mr. Speaker, I believe that if all hon. members of this House were to read the provisions of this bill and understand them, and if they were applying fairness and common sense to their deliberations, they would have to agree that these provisions deserve their support. And I am sure they will be approved by the people of the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

On motion a bill, "An Act To Amend The Department Of Education Act", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 5)

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, rather than call another order of business, I think it is just as well to call it six o'clock.

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

November 22, 1983

Tape No. 3299

IB-2

On motion, the
House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow,
Wednesday at 3:00 p.m.