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VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable James Russell

Tuesday

18 December 1984

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
Order, please!

Oral Questions

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

MR. NEARY:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question or two towards the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn). In view of the fact the Premier is not in his seat, I would like to ask him the question. Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that a former Minister of Labour in this Province, in the person of Mr. Joseph Rousseau, yesterday publicly stated that when the Termination of Employment Act Bill was brought into this House originally back in 1977 there were no mistakes and that the introduction of the amendment to the bill now is merely a red herring -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. NEARY:
- is merely a red herring on the part of the administration to muddy up the water for bringing in this amendment, Bill 37 into this House.

MR. DINN:
He did not say that.

MR. NEARY:
He did say that. In view of these statements by the then minister who introduced the bill into this House, Mr. Speaker, who has now

said there was no mistake, and some hon. gentlemen there opposite were in the Cabinet at the time, will the minister who introduced the amendment to Bill 37 now admit that the administration was attempting to mislead the House? Will the hon. gentleman apologize to the House and to the people of this Province for his false and misleading statements in view of the fact that Joe Rousseau who originally introduced the bill into this House categorically stated that there was no mistake made in the introduction of that bill, either when it was discussed in Cabinet or when it was introduced in second reading in the House.

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

MR. DINN:
Mr. Speaker, I can understand the hon. member saying something like that. Obviously I have not seen what Mr. Rousseau said but it is very interesting to note that Mr. Rousseau was talking about what went on in Cabinet and I suppose we would all like to be able to do that at times. Unfortunately I took an oath to say that I should not do that and of course I will not do that and I will just leave it up to the people and the House to decide whether it is appropriate for a person who takes an oath to do a certain thing and breaks that oath, if indeed he did which I do not believe he did, but if he did then I think somebody else would have to be left to judge, certainly not myself.

MR. NEARY:
On a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the Premier was in the Cabinet at that time, but I am not sure if the hon. gentleman was a member of the Cabinet in 1977. The point here, Mr. Speaker, is that the gentleman, the minister who introduced the bill has now stated publicly, categorically, there was no error, there was no mistake, there was no need for amendments, that this bill was designed to create a necessary social reform, in view of these circumstances and the statements made by Mr. Rousseau, the man who piloted the bill through the House, and in view of the fact that the Premier was in the Cabinet, would the hon. gentleman apologize to the House for any misleading statements, for any red herring they may have created during the recent debate on Bill 37?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Labour.

MR. DINN:

Mr. Speaker, I certainly am not going to apologize to the House for saving thousands and thousands of jobs for Newfoundlanders. The fact of the matter is that if the former, former, former minister said that, and I do not believe he said it, but if he did say it, and obviously we have to take the word of the hon. member who said he said it, although the hon. member has not got a good record of relating what a person says or what is related to the press, but if the hon. former, former minister did indeed say that there was no intention at the time, that there was no error in the act when it was brought in, then I would only have to say that former minister was wrong. There is nobody in Newfoundland and Labrador today believes that

except one; there is one person to my knowledge who has stated here in the House that the act was good as it was, but that is the only gentleman. Even the hon. members opposite believe that the act should be changed, and everyone else in Newfoundland and Labrador, to my knowledge, has said that it should be changed and now the hon. member does not agree with the former, former, former minister who said that there were no errors in the act in the beginning. Well, of course, I disagree with that. The hon. member does. The member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) does and just about everybody else in Newfoundland except one, to my knowledge. There is only one, to my knowledge, that I am aware of, and that is the hon. member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick), who said right from the beginning that the act was good as it was. But nobody else in Newfoundland, the President of the Federation of Labour said it should be changed, all of the members of the Opposition said that the act should be changed, and Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge there is only one member in Newfoundland who said it should not be changed. We will have to decide whether that Johnny is the only guy in step or is the only guy out of step. But the fact of the matter is we all know that the act needed to be changed. It was certainly something that was left out. The Termination of Employment Act had definitions in there. Every act that I am aware of in Canada have those definitions in there, Mr. Speaker, and if the former, former, former minister does not believe that there was an error, then he is only the second one in Newfoundland that I know of who believes what he is saying.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands, if the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands is awake. Mr. Speaker, there has been a great deal of concern about declining domestic wood supplies in the Province, particularly in areas such as the Avalon Peninsula, some of the islands around the Province, like the Twillingate area, and Port au Port, my own part of the Province, where people are turning to increased use of wood stoves instead of electricity and other forms of energy. I ask the minister what steps is his department taking to ensure that this very valuable resource is taken care of for the future?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member's question, I can say that this government and the Department of Forest Resources and Lands has undertaken numerous activities to try to enhance the forest resource of this Province for the long term benefit of all the people in Newfoundland and Labrador. I can say also to the hon. member that the interest, incidentally, in the use of wood for domestic use has dwindled over this past year from what it was in the previous years. I do not know if there seems to be a trend there or not.

But certainly the efforts of the department with respect to forest management I think are well known

all throughout the Province. And I just point out that there are all kinds of forest management projects underway, silviculture being the one of most interest, I guess, and where most of the emphasis has been placed in recent years. In discussions that I have had with the new federal Minister Forestry (Mr. Merithew), which in itself is an example, I guess, of the federal government recognizing the importance of the forest resource, towards a new Federal/Provincial Forestry Subsidiary Agreement, it appears there will be even more emphasis placed on projects like silviculture. Not only does that employ people, of course, but it also does a lot to enhance the resource that is so important and so crucial to the future of the industry in Newfoundland and Labrador.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, on a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for Port au Port, a supplementary.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the minister that to say the use of domestic wood is down in the Province is somewhat misleading because so much wood is being cut in some of the areas, I have been told by officials in his department - not recently, but within the past year - that there are areas of the Province that could be without wood within five, to ten years.

Mr. Speaker, another aspect of this particular question is the minister's department allows a certain amount of wood to be cut per, say, a family unit, but there is no policing of the cutting.

MR. SIMMS:

No what?

MR. HODDER:

No policing. In other words, if you are allowed to cut two cords or three cords - I am not quite sure of the amount that you are allowed to cut, but I know it is basically what you would normally burn in a year if you had a woodstove - there is no policing of that. As well there are people without permits who sell wood in certain areas, not in all areas of the Province, but this is adding to the drain on the wood supply in particular areas of the Province. I would ask the minister if he has any plans in order to police, perhaps, or have his officials keep a check on what is being burned? And is there any check on those people who sell wood?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, our people in the field are constantly on the outlook for illegal activities as it applies to the cutting of wood without permits and so on. We are aware of those areas where there have been instances. But I can assure the hon. member that we intend to continue with those kinds of efforts.

MR. DINN:

But you do not want to go out on a limb.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I had a question for

the Premier, but since he is not here I will address my question to the minister responsible for the Petroleum Directorate. Yesterday in Question Period, in a particularly acrimonious exchange between the Premier and the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), the Premier said that if you want to you can come down to my office at nine o'clock tomorrow morning and see -

MR. NEARY:

I did not go down. I did not go down!

MR. FENWICK:

That is all right, I did. I wanted to find out what the information was. The question I have is does that offer to have a look at the final papers, the final documents from the PC Government versus the Liberal offer, still stand and can I avail myself of it?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I remember the exchange but I do not remember it as being bitter at all. I remember it being snakelike coming from the other side, which is normal, but I do not remember bitter from this side. Would the hon. gentleman just like to elaborate a bit?

MR. FENWICK:

On a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

As I recall the exchange, the Premier was calling into doubt the particular version that the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) was putting forward of the particular

offer from the Liberal Administration in contrast to the PC Administration. In order to prove that the PC offer was considerably better than the Liberal one, the Premier offered to invite the member down at nine o'clock in the morning in order to have a look at both final documents. That is the way I recall it. Does that offer for me still stand?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I guess it is the offer on the offshore that the hon. gentleman refers to?

MR. FENWICK:

Yes.

MR. MARSHALL:

The documents on the Liberal offer are quite explicit, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the hon. gentleman asked the question because I came back from Ottawa and on the plane I saw the Globe and Mail wax expansive over the offer from the point of view of Newfoundland, saying Newfoundland got what it wanted. The Montreal Gazette said Newfoundland got what it wanted. And one of the papers I think it was The Halifax Chronical Herald even said that it was offered to the Government of Nova Scotia. Having returned to St. John's, I went for an interview with CBC, and all they seem to be focusing on was what was wrong. So they got a fellow from a Mr. Voyez from the Economic Council of Canada, who had not even seen the offer.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Who never had been in Newfoundland.

MR. MARSHALL:

So I said to the people out there, 'Is this a hangover of our colonial past?'

MR. NEARY:

You were suffering from jet lag.

MR. TULK:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

The hon. the member for Fogo, on a point of order.

MR. MARSHALL:

The hon. gentleman does not want the answer.

MR. TULK:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

I know, Mr. Speaker, that the government is in trouble with its offshore deal, we all know that in the Province, and we all know that the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) is trying to use every opportunity that he can to get out from under. Now the question was very simple and required a simple and a short answer. We ask him to stop abusing Question Period and let us get on with it, boy.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

The gentleman for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) has asked a question and I am responding to it.

Anyway so, Mr. Speaker, I said, 'Is this a hangover from our colonial past?'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please! Order, please!

To that point of order, the Chair again must remind all hon. members that questions should be very brief and require very brief answers. I am sure the hon. the President of the Council is aware that his answers should be very brief.

MR. MARSHALL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will just draw my answer to a quick close. I said, 'Have we got to get the British raj or somebody from away to tell us what is good for us? Can we not analyze it ourselves?' If the hon. gentleman wants to know what is in the offer he can certainly analyze it because the documents are there and we would be quite happy to give them to him.

For instance, Mr. Chretien was asked, "Is it a good offer?" "No, we gave a better offer." And people accept that. Nobody said to him, 'But, Mr. Chretien, they have now agreed on three/three and an independent Chairman whereas you only agreed to have three federal and two provincial representatives and insisted federal regulations apply. Mr. Chretien, you say the offer of money is better, but you had a cap. What these people from Newfoundland have managed to negotiate is to establish and collect taxes as if the resource were on land.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, am I supposed to hide away from the negative people of this world, the CBC et al, and hang my head in disgrace because this government has negotiated the same position as Alberta with respect to its offshore, no more, no less?

So those documents are there and the hon. -

MR. TULK:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for Fogo, on a point of order.

MR. TULK:

Like I was saying to the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall), we know he wants to take every opportunity he can to explain that deal where he is giving away, perhaps, more than he has got. We know that, Mr. Speaker. But the question simply put to him I think was would the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) be able to see a certain set of documents? He did not ask for an explanation, so the minister can stand up and say either yes or no. He is abusing Question Period, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for LaPoile, to that point of order.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I believe the question the hon. gentleman asked was could he see the document, because the Premier had invited me down to his office on the eighth floor. Well, let me assure the hon. gentleman that when I go to

the eighth floor I will not be going to look at documents, I will be going to sit in the Premier's chair in the Premier's office.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

To that point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. DINN:

What about, 'Leo'?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

What about 'Leo'? What about 'Leo'?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, all I want to say is that the Opposition is obviously getting nervous because I am about to eviscerate the jealous Tory who is their leader, and his superfluous, silly statements with respect to it. But I say to the hon. gentleman, there is a letter from Mr. Mulroney -

MR. NEARY:

Is he speaking on the point of order?

MR. SIMMS:

He is still talking on the point of order, boy.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

The Chair recognizes the hon. the President of the Council as

speaking to that point of order.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I say I will abide by your ruling and if Your Honour tells me I cannot go on I will not eviscerate the jealous Tory, I will just answer directly the hon. the member for Menihek (Mr. Walsh).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

To that point of order, the hon. the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) I am sure is aware that he should be very brief to the question asked and I would suggest that perhaps he should clue up his answer.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact I will see that the hon. gentleman gets a copy of the analysis on the offer that Mr. Chretien gave to this government, as well as Mr. Lalonde, which was total domination of this government, and I will also give him, as I am sure he has, a copy of the letter from the Prime Minister of Canada which indicates that Newfoundland is going to manage the offshore, have a final, ultimate decision on the mode of production, have the ability to establish and collect taxes as if they were on land, the same as Alberta, have a position where despite the flow of money that is going to choke us we are not going to have equalization payments cut off from us.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! The hon. the member for Fogo, on a point of order.

MR. TULK:

It seems to me that the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) is trying to do through the backdoor what he cannot do through the front door, namely disobey the ruling of Your Honour. So I would ask Your Honour to rule him out of order, tell him to sit in his seat and wait for other questions, rather than abusing Question Period.

DR. COLLINS:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I have to rise on behalf of the hon. the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick). He is apparently too shy or he does not know the rules enough to rise on his own behalf but clearly he is embarrassing the Opposition, they will not let him ask a question, they will not let him get an answer, they keep interfering with his rights. They keep interfering with Question Period by raising spurious points of order, so Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the House Leader (Mr. Tulk) opposite be asked to sit down, hold his place and let the member for Menihek get answers to his questions.

MR. SIMMS:

Spurious points of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

To that point of order, I would request the hon. President of the Council to clue up his remarks.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I will just conclude

by saying to the hon. gentleman, yes, we will give to the hon. gentleman, and everybody in this Province, all the information that is necessary and they will see what a tremendous agreement we have entered into and the difference it shows between us and the Uncle Toms on the other side who kowtow to everything and would have, Mr. Speaker, resulted in this Province being recipients of welfare payments, albeit from their own resources, forever and a day. So, Mr. Speaker, my heart leaps up. The only thing I wish is that the CBC could shuck our colonial past and not rely on other people to tell us how good or how bad we did but have enough depth to do their own analysis of this very beneficial meeting for the people of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek, a supplementary.

MR. FENWICK:

Just a final supplementary which has to do with exactly which documents I am going to get to see because I am not particularly interested in looking at the Mulroney letter. When I heard the Premier yesterday, and I checked back with Hansard, he said the final documents from the Liberal Government and the final documents from the PC Government in Ottawa. What I wish to see is the final agreement that is being worked on by Cabinet now. Is that the one I will be allowed to look at now?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the

Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman will realize that we are in the process which, "we have just about completed," to quote Ms. Carney. There are only technicalities but they are legal technicalities put up by the lawyers that we are required to go into, and we will do that for posterity. If the hon. gentleman wants to see the kernel of that document, he should look at the letter from Mr. Mulroney. Mr. Mulroney keeps his promises to the people of this Province, just as this government kept its promises to the people of this Province when it sought a mandate to negotiate to get a fair deal. Because now we have a situation, Mr. Speaker, where we are on the threshold of standing in the same position as Alberta. The jealous Tory who talks about back-in should back off, because who worries, Mr. Speaker, about back-ins and what have you when you have the right to establish and collect taxes on land? Mr. Speaker, could we do any better for the people of this Province than to secure the same rights that Alberta has for the purpose of exploration and development of oil and gas? I ask you, Mr. Speaker, could we? So the hon. gentlemen are barking up the wrong tree. The hon. gentlemen backed quislings, three of whom remain up in Ottawa and have the gall to get up and ask questions about the offshore agreements. And the Liberal Party of this Province did not stand with the people of this Province, we did and that agreement will show it.

MR. TULK;

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Government House Leader.

MR. BAIRD:

He will be on television tonight.

MR. TULK:

Yes, we have to put him on television tonight because it is worth 500 votes.

MR. NEARY:

Lord Haw-Haw.

MR. TULK:

My question, Mr. Speaker, concerns the restructuring agreement that was hailed by the Premier last year as being the greatest document since Confederation. It concerns the Resource Utilization Task Force that was supposed to be put in place and has been put in place, which is probably one of the most important sections in that agreement. Since we cannot get the Minister of Fisheries or the Premier in the House, I ask the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) to be quite calm when he stands up and to take just a minute to tell me when we can expect to see that report and what effect it is going to have on the harvesting plan whenever it comes into place.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman's gall absolutely daunts me, that the hon. gentleman can get up and ask questions with respect to the fishery restructuring. You talk about the Resource Utilization Task Force; the people of Burin know what the Resource Utilization

Task Force is, ask them. Ask the people of Gaultois, ask the people of Grand Bank, ask the people in many other centres of this Province whose fish plants were threatened with closure, while the hon. gentleman sat there and acquiesced in it and this government fought it tooth and nail. Now what happened with the restructuring agreement was -

MR. TULK:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the member for Fogo, on point of order.

MR. TULK:

I am sure the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) is not deliberately misleading this House, but he is misleading the House when he says that we acquiesced in allowing Grand Bank to close. He will recall, and I am sure my hon. friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) will recall that it was first the policy on this side that all fish plants in this Province remain open and members opposite stole it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, that is not a point of order. I do not know whether Your Honour would wish to rule on it?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

To that point of order, the Chair

recognized the hon. the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) in asking a question of the President of the Council and the Chair is satisfied that the President of the Council was answering the question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MARSHALL:

They did not. Indeed they did not. Mr. Speaker, when we negotiated restructuring what the hon. gentlemen there opposite and their confreres in Ottawa wanted to do was say that Burin had to close down, that Grand Bank had to close down, that Gaultois had to close down. I know some of the - I have to call them people, I suppose, there is another word for them. I know some of the people we were talking to were even talking about the resettlement of Gaultois and they said, "Oh, we will give you compensation. We will build a nice little road to Harbour Breton and will it not be nice. We will put a nice little ferry on and will it not be nice because all the people from Gaultois can go into Harbour Breton." And that is what the hon. gentlemen there opposite supported. So I want to tell the hon. gentleman that since September 4 many of the things in this Province that were precipitating us towards disaster have been pulled back from the brink of disaster and the fishery restructuring is one of them. The matter of the Resource Utilization Task Force is a matter of real concern to the Province. As you know, we took, Mr. Speaker, ages to get a Chief Executive Officer appointed, we have a chief executive officer now appointed, we have management of Fishery Products International appointed, we have the plants operated, we

have concerted efforts being taken to utilize the resources of this Province and we will do everything possible to utilize them.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

I have a question for the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). When will the Public Accounts of the Province be tabled in the House? Will they be tabled before Christmas? We have asked this question for the past three or four weeks and we have not got a satisfactory answer yet.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, the Public Accounts give final accounting of all of the total allocations voted by this House.

MR. TULK:

We will never know what those are with you as minister.

DR. COLLINS:

There is a sort of noxious noise coming from across the way somewhere.

Anyway the total appropriations are contained in the various supply bills whether they be Interim Supply, main supply or Supplementary Supply and we have not had all the supply that was passed by this House yet.

MR. NEARY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for LaPoile, a supplementary.

MR. NEARY:

The hon. gentleman told us the other day that the Auditor General's Report would have to be scrutinized by the Department of Finance before it was tabled in the House. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask the hon. gentleman has not the Auditor General's Report item by item already been scrutinized by the hon. gentleman's department or does the hon. gentleman know how the system works? When will the Auditor General's Report be tabled in the House?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, according to The Financial Administration Act it is my duty to table the report if I have received it by January 31 at the latest.

MR. NEARY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

A supplementary the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Has the hon. gentleman received the Auditor General's Report?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I have not yet been so informed by my officials.

MR. NEARY:

What a cowardly answer, Mr. Speaker.

Let me switch over to the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe). Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman will recall that when the Sullivan Royal Commission reported in this

Province five years ago they recommended that the Newfoundland Railway be disbanded. The Liberal Government in Ottawa at the time, through the hon. Otto Lang said no to that recommendation, that the Newfoundland railway would be given a new lease on life, that the Newfoundland railway would be given an opportunity to introduce new technology, containerization and so forth and so on and they were given an allocation of funds by the government of Canada to do all these things. Now, Mr. Speaker, a review of the past five years indicates that the modernization and the change over to containerization has been successful. The Government of Canada have now to approve another five year extension or they have to approve that the Newfoundland railway is here to stay as a permanent service in this Province. What steps has the hon. gentleman taken to demand that his Tory friends up in Ottawa before March 31 will announce a decision that the Newfoundland railway is here to stay?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
Order, please!

The time for the Question Period has expired.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to the galleries a former member of this Legislature from the district of St. Mary's - The Capes, Mr. Derek Hancock.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Presenting Reports by
Standing and Special Committees

MR. WINDSOR:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WINDSOR:
Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report for NORDCO for the year 1983-84.

DR. COLLINS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. COLLINS:
Mr. Speaker, I table the Eleventh Annual Report of the Liquor Licencing Board.

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, in response to a question yesterday from the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) when he asked if we could somehow break down what is in the agreement and put down on a little piece of paper in baby talk, in simplistic terms the Province's potential financial exposure with respect to the Kruger agreement, I can tell him that the Province's share of the capital grants, the modernization programme, is \$7.2 million, the upper limit of the loan funding is \$11 million, the put option maximum value, which is contingent, of course, and we have

the power plant as security as everybody recalls, is \$30 million, the access roads is \$2 million, for a total of \$50.2 million and I would also point out as another part of our encouragement -

MR. NEARY:
Another liability?

MR. SIMMS:
No, it is not a liability.

The other thing is that the Province also as you will recall in last year's budget, exempted retail sales tax on manufacturing equipment, based on a capital programme of about \$200 million that would work out to be about \$14 million.

MR. NEARY:
\$64.2 million.

MR. SIMMS:
Yes, if you want to look at it in that sort of simplistic way. I explained through committee how all the funds were arranged but that is what the hon. member wanted. It is all in the agreement anyway.

MR. NEARY:
I thank the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker. That is exactly what I wanted because I was finding it very difficult to get a handle on it. We are talking about \$64.2 million.

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

The hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is responding to Answers to Questions which I am sure he is aware he is not supposed to do.

Orders of the Day

MR. MARSHALL:
Motion 4, Mr. Speaker.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Fisheries (Acting) (Mr. Goudie) to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Fisheries Loan Act," carried. (Bill No. 62).

On motion, Bill No. 62 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:
Order 12, Bill No. 41.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Provide For The Calculation And Consideration Of The Provincial Content Factor In The Awarding Of Tenders By Government Funded Bodies." (Bill No. 41).

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

MR. WINDSOR:
Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce this piece of legislation today. As the hon. House knows well, the government has for some years been implementing a provincial preference policy in relation to the purchasing of goods and services and the utilization of locally produced products and government contracts. This particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, provides greater impact to that policy by enshrining it in legislation and also by ensuring that all government funded bodies will now be liable to and will apply the provincial preference policies. These are listed in the act, Mr.

Speaker. As hon. gentlemen know the maximum limits of provincial preference is up to 15 per cent based on a factor of 1.5 of the ratio of the benefit of provincial content to the cost of that provincial content. The contract with the highest provincial content factor of the qualified bids received is the one that is chosen. There are a strict set of guidelines and regulations which I am prepared to make available to hon. members. As hon. gentlemen know, as I indicated, a number of government agencies will now be covered in addition to government Crown corporations, the municipalities and local service districts under the Municipalities Act, including the city of St. John's and the city of Corner Brook, school boards established under the School Board Act, any agencies and authorities of the Province, hospitals under the Hospital Act, any boards, commissions, corporations or other bodies listed in the scheduling. Two exceptions, Mr. Speaker, are NORDCO and Marystown Shipyard. And as I indicated during the debate on the Public Tender Act, the rationale for that is that both of these companies are commercially competitive and must be allowed to remain commercially competitive in order to be economically viable. It would be unfair and unreasonable of a government to expect these Crown corporations, which, although they are Crown corporations, are effectively both operating without any government subsidies at this point in time and must compete with other, of course, private institutions, therefore it would be unreasonable and improper for us to expect them to carry a penalty for provincial preference although, without exception, they make every effort to comply with

the spirit and intent of the legislation and the provincial preference policy. The other aspect of it is that in both cases these companies do enter into commercial joint ventures with other companies established outside the Province and are doing contracts outside the Province, so it may be difficult therefore to enforce this type of regulation upon those particular joint ventures and joint venture contracts.

The provincial overhead allowance, the provincial labour content and the provincial merit material content shall be calculated in the prescribed manner and the regulations shall be prescribed (a) in the case of provincial overhead allowance the criteria and value of the criteria that indicate a presence of the bidder in the Province: (b) in the case of provincial labour content, the value of the labour content in mining, harvesting, manufacturing, processing or assembly done in the Province is part of the qualified bid; and (e) in the case of provincial material content, the value of the raw material mined or harvested in the Province as part of the qualified bid.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the provincial preference policy has been extremely effective and what we are simply doing here is giving more strength to the policy by enshrining it in legislation and by broadening it to ensure that essentially all government funded bodies, with the two exceptions I have named, will be covered by this particular policy. I think it is interesting to note the success that this policy has seen thus far. Statistics as of 31 October 1984 indicate that out of 286 contracts

awarded, based on policy guidelines, with a total value in excess of \$36 million, the cost of accepting these bids other than the lower bidder was just \$1 million, which is 2.9 per cent of the total value. The percentage difference in the low bid price and preferred bid price and benefits in labour and materials amounted to an estimated \$3.7 million: Therefore our provincial content factor was a 3.45 on the average versus the 1.5 that we have chosen. I admit that the 1.5 was somewhat arbitrary when the policy was established some four or five years ago. Nevertheless it seems to be working very well, it seems to be a level that is appropriate to the policy that we are trying to put in place. A number of things have taken place. Number one, we have maximized, I think, to a very large degree the amount of local labour and the materials that have been used. Now, of course, the policy applies to all publicly tendered goods and services in addition to capital works and we can, of course, accept other than the low bid price subject to certain established formulas and regulations. It uses a valuated approach to evaluate all tenders to ensure that the Province receives maximum value for its procurement dollar while at the same time maintaining the competitive business process. The policy, of course, was originally designed to benefit provincial manufactures and processors and to encourage this sector of the economy primarily. Of course now we have expanded that to benefit other sectors of the business community indicating a reluctance to co-operate with the implementation of the policy and to source materials from provincial manufactures and

processors. It was decided to expand the policy to include all sectors of the provincial business community. I might add that a number of companies have seen significant benefits. I could list them, Mr. Speaker, but I will not do that. What I will do is table these notes that I have here which gives a list of some of the more significant contracts, gives some date. I do not want to waste the time of the House reading them out here. There are a page and three quarters of companies here that have indicated to us a very strong advantage as a result of the provincial preference policy. I might add that we have changed the threshold limit of public tenders from \$1000, which was in the original policy, to \$5000 in keeping with the recommendations of the Implementation Committee responsible for the Mahoney Royal Commission. And what this does, of course, is give government departments a little more flexibility and reduces an awful lot of administrative paper work. In fact, I think we found in many, many cases that the cost of calling tenders for some of these services valued at less than \$1000, the tender call cost was actually more than the value of the goods or services being supplied, it was in fact counterproductive, so we have raised that threshold limit now to \$5000. As I said, there is a list here of some of the companies, the most significant ones that have benefited.

A number of things have taken place as a result of the provincial content and the evaluation of that. A number of firms have moved to increase provincial content by having more work performed here in

Newfoundland using local labour. We could list a number of examples of that and there is no question at all that that is indeed taking place. I have numerous letters in my files from companies which indicate that not only are they doing that but they have received significant benefits. It has caused a number of firms to take steps to open Newfoundland offices and to retain new staff to establish a greater physical presence here in the Province. And it is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that in the last five or six years in excess of 300 new companies have established in our Province primarily aimed at being involved in the offshore oil and gas industry, and that is primarily a factor of provincial preference and the provincial preference clauses of Newfoundland's offshore regulations. In addition to that, of course, there are a number of companies that have sought out local firms to act as agents or their Newfoundland representatives. There is also very strong evidence to indicate that mainland suppliers and local agents accustomed to receiving government supply contracts have significantly reduced bid prices compared with the previous years to more effectively compete with local suppliers and manufacturers, obviously who enjoy this 10 to 15 per cent provincial preference. We have also found on routine investigations by officials of the department and daily contact with various government purchasing officials that this is having positive results as well for local industry. The people are now becoming more aware of the capabilities of local manufacturers and make greater efforts to source requirements from local suppliers rather than

from established mainland suppliers as in the past. As a result of the efforts of officials of the department to identify opportunities for joint procurement within the overall government procurement system, officials, particularly those in the purchasing departments, have become more aware of government's standing offers and are making greater use of this mechanism to purchase materials and save money on the strength of government's purchasing power. Again, the policy is an encouragement to local business people to attempt new business ventures. The knowledge that the government is prepared to pay slightly more than the lower competitors price reduces that risk in new endeavours simply by the fact that they have this level of government support. Government contractors, particularly major food contractors, are making a greater effort to source local products and thus increase the local content on their particular bid. The policy has the potential to create a greater awareness within government and the consulting community of the importance of designing construction projects to make greater use of local materials and local expertise. As well in the Public Tender Act, the proposed amendments to that act and the introduction of the new provincial preference legislation, we will require more public tendering by government funded bodies and as a result Newfoundland firms will again be better able to identify business opportunities and to quote on government requirements, many of which may have been in the past filled from outside the Province. So all in all, Mr. Speaker, what this policy does together with the Public Tender Act ensures that all

government procurement is done in accordance with the public tender policy, the provincial preference policy is applied to it and that we are indeed giving every possible benefit to companies within the Province and that we are ensuring that the maximum utilization of goods and services from within the Province is being realized.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure there will be some questions and we will try to answer them as we go through.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, what we just heard is a statement from an administration that would put the LaSage Administration to shame when it comes to figuring out way to dole out political patronage to your friends and supporters, and to get around the Public Tendering Act so that you can show a little favouritism to your friends and supporters. The hon. gentleman made a statement that this was meant to maximize the benefits to local business. What it is designed to do, Mr. Speaker, is maximize the benefits to the supporters of the Tory Party. Because the real danger in this bill, Mr. Speaker, is in the regulations. The regulations are made by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council, in other words by the Cabinet.

MR. WINDSOR:

What is wrong with that?

MR. NEARY:

What is wrong with it? If you give the Cabinet the authority to make regulations under this bill you would want eyes in the back of your head to watch them to see

what they are doing. The hon. gentleman may not be aware, but there is a very dangerous situation in this Province at the present time involving the Premier's office and two individuals who head up a group of companies in this Province, a very dangerous situation indeed between the Premier, one Mr. Frank Ryan, and one Mr. Basil Dobbin.

DR. COLLINS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance, on a point of order.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, this House was never meant to malign private citizens. This House has privileges and there are things you can say in this House which people would be ill-advised to say outside of this House because they might be subject to court action. But even though the House has that privilege it, was never meant to extend to the maligning private citizens without the clearest evidence for an allegations that are made.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite is making allegations without the slightest shred of evidence to back them up. He is offering not a single thing, he is just offering a comment, a comment without any backing. He is offering a comment which is a slur on anyone's name. It is a disgrace. It is violating the intent of this House. And I do not think the hon. member should be allowed to misuse the privileges of this House for those types of purposes that do harm to private individuals who are in no

position to either to defend themselves, nor indeed could they defend themselves because no evidence is offered for the outrageous allegations that are made.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please!

MR. NEARY:

The hon. gentleman does not know what he is talking about.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

To that point of order, I would remind all hon. members that we are discussing the principle of Bill No. 41.

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In other words, there is no point of order. The hon. gentleman would be better advised if he concentrated on trying to balance the Budget. In other jurisdictions in Canada and in the United States the Ministers of Finance are a little bit out in their estimates. The hon. gentleman is usually 500 per cent, 600 per cent, 1000 per cent out in his estimates. He should go buy a \$2.00 pocket size calculator to try to balance the Budget.

DR. COLLINS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

On a point of order, the hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

What the hon. member just said

backs up what I am saying. He is so inaccurate and so wild in his statements that what he has just said backs up what I said previously.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please!

To that point of order, I do remind the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) that he was straying from the principle of Bill No. 41 at that time.

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the point that I was making when I was so rudely interrupted by the incompetent Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) we have in this Province - he thinks, Mr. Speaker, that if you buy for \$1.00 and sell for \$2.00, it is a 1 per cent profit; that is the kind of a Minister of Finance we have - but the point I was making when I was interrupted by the hon. gentleman is that we have a very dangerous situation in this Province involving the Premier and two Tory bagmen, one the provincial co-ordinator for the Tory election campaigns in this Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, they are the ones who are getting the favouritism and the patronage. It is for these people that this kind of a bill is introduced in this hon. House.

MR. CARTER:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please!

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

MR. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, this is McCarthyite

tactics at their very worst. These hon. gentlemen are not in this House or privileged to come into this House to defend themselves. I would suggest that not only is the member breaking all the established rules, but all the implied rules in all the parliaments of British North America when he engages in that kind of comment. And I would urge you, Mr. Speaker, to examine his statements most carefully with a view even perhaps of naming him.

MR. NEARY:

The truth hurts, Mr. Speaker. There is no point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

To that point of order, I do remind hon. members once again that we are discussing second reading of Bill No. 41.

MR. NEARY:

Thank you, Sir. And the truth hurts.

Now maybe I will be permitted to carry on, Mr. Speaker, without silly, non-sensical interruptions by hon. gentlemen who cannot take it. They cannot take it. I am obviously touching a nerve on the other side when hon. gentlemen who really very rarely participate in debate are leaping to their feet trying to defend and trying to surpress debate on this bill.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that we can go back to the renting of office space down in the Murray Premises. For several years the administration there opposite rented office space that went unoccupied, they rented more space than they required, and, Mr. Speaker, it went unoccupied, and yet the taxpayers

had to pay rent for that space. We have gone from that situation to the Upper Salmon where Viking-Sintra - Viking being a local company, its principal, Mr. Dobbin - Viking-Sintra bid on a contract on the Upper Salmon, a firm contract, a fixed contract, no extras, Mr. Speaker, involved. Three years ago I asked about the claims by that company for extra payment -

MR. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please!

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

MR. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member does have a particular grudge against the hon. gentleman that he is referring to, there is a proper procedure in this House for doing that. You can get up on a point of privilege, presumably, and submit documentation to the table for consideration by the appropriate committee of this House.

But just in the course of debate to name names and to hurl accusations is the worst form of McCarthyism, which I thought we had cured the hon. gentleman of this time last year. But apparently he is so sunk into depravity that he is not even aware when he is blackening or trying to blacken the names of individuals.

And as for my reluctance to get up and engage in debate, every time I hear the name of a person who is not a member of this House being maligned, I will get up and if not spring to his defence certainly

question the motives of his accuser.

MR. NEARY:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

To that point of order, the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, this is the same hon. big galoot that viciously attacked a former Premier of this Province, viciously attacked him in this House when he was not here to defend himself, who would not allow Mr. Smallwood to have his last address in this House televised. He is so politically bigotted and narrow-minded and prejudiced, Mr. Speaker, he is so low and rotten that he could crawl under a snake's belly. And I would submit that all the hon. gentleman is doing is harassing and trying to intimidate me. I have a point to make and I am going to make it whether the hon. gentleman likes it or not. The hon. gentleman used to defend A.B. Walsh there a few years ago on that side of the House, and we all remember that case, Mr. Speaker. But the hon. gentleman was a defender of that particular gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, all we are trying to do is protect the public treasury from being gouged by these greedy moneybags in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please!

To that point of order, there is a difference of opinion between two hon. members.

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CARTER:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. CARTER:

I had to wait until Your Honour disposed of the previous point of order, because obviously we cannot bring up a point of order in the midst of another point of order. The hon. member - I call him 'honourable' because I suppose I have to - suggested that I had defended Mr. A. B. Walsh in this House, I certainly did not. And I would like him to quote chapter and verse and produce documentation if he continues in his accusations.

MR. NEARY:

He cannot take it now.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please!

To that point of order, it was more of a point of clarification than a difference of opinion.

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, they can dish it out but they cannot take it.

But the fact of the matter is that we asked three years ago for information on a claim made by Viking-Sintra which had the general contract for the construction of the Upper Churchill, and we were told that the information would be forthcoming. We asked last year

for the information and we were told that it would be forthcoming, we asked for the information again a couple of weeks ago and we were told by none other than the Premier that the information would be forthcoming. As a matter of fact the Premier said, 'Before this very day is over I will supply the House with the information,' and the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) said the same thing. They danced around as they usually do and told us that we would be given the information on the settlement by Newfoundland Hydro on a claim for extras by Viking - Sintra. Mr. Speaker, to this day we do not have the information. The government is refusing to give us the information. Why? What do they have to hide? How much was the settlement? What was it for? Can we have the legal opinions of the Justice Department on whether or not Viking - Sintra had a case, whether they had a claim? Mr. Speaker, we are talking about several millions of taxpayers dollars.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What contractor are you talking about?

MR. NEARY:

The general contractor on the Upper Salmon, Viking - Sintra.

I believe the original claim by Viking - Sintra was \$9 million which they wanted over and above the contract, extra. They wanted \$9 million more than they tendered for and the hon. Savoury King down there does not think that is a very serious matter. The King of the Savoury Patch thinks that is a big joke, that we should not raise that, Mr. Speaker, the hon. King of Dogpatch. Viking - Sintra wanted \$9 million extra over and

above their contract. Last year we were told that it may go to court, this year we are told that a consulting firm was brought in from the Mainland.

MR. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the member for St. John's North.

MR. CARTER:

The hon. gentleman, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), is abusing his position in this House. There is a proper procedure for making accusations and it is done as I understand the rules, on a point of privilege and the evidence is laid on the table of the House for consideration by the appropriate committee of this House. But it is misusing his privileges during debate just to make wildcat, McCarthyite-like accusations and I feel he should be invited to sit down.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I would remind the hon. member that we are dealing with Bill 41.

MR. NEARY:

Right on, Sir. So there is no point of order and if the hon. gentleman keeps interrupting me I might send him back the bag of savoury he sent me over yesterday for Christmas. I do not know if you can get high on savoury. The hon. gentleman is on a little bit of a trip down there today, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TULK:

Why do we not stuff him with his own savoury?

MR. NEARY:

I would put the hon. gentleman on

the table of the House and stuff him with his own savoury.

So, Mr. Speaker, Viking - Sintra put in a claim for \$9 million over and above what they were entitled to. Now we were told this year by the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) that a consulting firm was brought in from the Mainland and that consulting firm recommended a settlement. Now, Mr. Speaker, are we not entitled to all the documents in connection with that settlement, the legal opinions?

MR. WINDSOR:

What has this got to do with the Public Tender Act?

MR. NEARY:

It has all to do with public tendering.

MR. WINDSOR:

It has nothing to do with it. Relevance, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY:

What do you mean irrelevant? It is not irrelevant to the bill.

MR. WINDSOR:

Was that contract awarded on the basis of provincial preference?

MR. NEARY:

Yes.

MR. WINDSOR:

It was?

MR. NEARY:

As far as I know it was.

MR. WINDSOR:

Well was it or was it not?

MR. NEARY:

I do not know, but as far as I know it was.

MR. WINDSOR:

Go back and find out.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the whole idea of Viking, Dobbin's company joining up in a joint venture with Sintra was to give it the local flavour, was to give it the local preference. That was the whole intent behind it. The hon. gentleman does not think we are naive or stupid, does he? That was the whole purpose of it. Sintra or any of these Mainland companies were quite able to bid on that contract on their own, but no, Mr. Dobbin's company wanted to get the door open. So Viking, of which he is the owner, joined with Viking to create Viking - Sintra. Now, Mr. Speaker, the questions that we want answered are these. How much was the settlement? I have a feeling it was several millions of dollars, but nobody knows yet. But, Mr. Speaker, they were not entitled to one red cent according to the opinions so we are told, of the Justice Department. All this information should be tabled. Is the hon. the member for St. Mary's - The Capes (Mr. Hearn) not concerned about that matter? The main reason the hon. gentleman was sent to this House was to protect the public treasury.

AN HON. MEMBER:

And he is doing a good job too.

MR. NEARY:

Well, he is certainly not doing a good job if he lets that go unnoticed, if he does not ask questions about that.

MR. TOBIN:

Sit down, boy. you are making a fool of yourself.

MR. NEARY:

I just gave the hon. gentleman some facts.

The fact is that that claim was settled out of court, fact number one. Fact number two, we do not know how much the claim was settled for, we have not seen the documents and we have not see the legal opinion of the legal counsel in the Justice Department on that matter. We have not seen the consultants report. Are the members of this House not entitled to have all that information? Is the hon. gentleman not entitled to have it? Of course he is. He has sense enough to realize that.

MR. WINDSOR:

It is no trouble to get that.

MR. NEARY:

It is no trouble to get it? Mr. Speaker, we asked for it two weeks ago and we were told we would have it before the day was over and we have not got it yet. They have no intention of giving the House that information. It is just a straight gift to a Tory bagman, to somebody who supported the Tory party, who collected funds for the Tory party. I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, what kind of a donation went to the Tory party coffers as a result of that settlement.

MR. DINN:

In this world there is nobody I know believes you.

MR. NEARY:

The hon. gentleman might be surprised.

MR. CARTER:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

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

MR. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, this is a veiled accusation. If the hon. gentleman has an accusation to make, let him make it at the appropriate time, in the appropriate place, in the appropriate manner. Furthermore, he should substantiate it. He is abusing his privileges as a member of this House to be carrying on the way he does and I think he should be told to sit down.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I am not aware of any rule that prevents an hon. member from commenting on somebody who is not in the House.

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the real question that needs answering is how much of the settlement went to the Tory coffers to help get hon. gentlemen over there elected and how much is being contributed to hon. gentlemen there opposite to fight the next election. They will have their party fund well established, well built up before The Election Expenses Act is brought into this House, because, Mr. Speaker, The Election Expenses Act will not be retroactive, I can guarantee you that. Whatever is in the fund then is in and I submit that would be a pretty fat fund, that Tory campaign fund, Mr. Speaker, for the next election. The real point is this, Mr. Speaker, that it is a very dangerous situation. Here are the three musketeers, the Premier, Ryan and Dobbin, and they are getting all the contracts. They just got the one on the Burin Hospital. Even before this act came into this House, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman there opposite

found a way to get around The Public Tendering Act and award a contract on the Burin hospital to another one of Mr. Dobbins companies, Olympia.

MR. TOBIN:

What is wrong with that?

MR. NEARY:

What is wrong with that? Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is so dense he does not understand.

MR. TOBIN:

You are against Burin getting a hospital. You were against it when you were in government.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the construction of the hospital has absolutely nothing to do with it. What we are talking about is political patronage, favouritism and pork barrelling. That is what we are talking about in this bill. And I am pointing out to hon. gentlemen there opposite the dangerous situation we have with the three musketeers. I could go on and on. They are now in the offshore business, they are in the building material business and, Mr. Speaker, the real reason, by the way, in case hon. gentlemen are not aware of it, the real reason in eliminating the tax on building supplies a couple of years ago was to accommodate one of these gentlemen who operates a building supply company, and business was bad. We were passing through a recession, interest rates were high, business was bad and so to accommodate that hon. gentleman, eliminate the sales tax on building material.

So, Mr. Speaker, let us be under on illusions of what we are dealing with here. We are dealing with an administration that wrote

the book when it comes to pork barreling and political patronage and favouritism. And we have the most explosive and dangerous situation we have ever had in this Province in our whole history now before us. And, Mr. Speaker, when they want to give Mr. Dobbin or Mr. Ryan a contract, they will find a way to do it. They will find a way to do it, Mr. Speaker, they will find a way. The amount of money we are talking about is substantial, Mr. Speaker, a substantial amount of money. And when the hon. gentleman talks about maligning, the maligning he is talking about is lining the pockets of these two individuals and their companies, that is the lining the hon. gentleman is talking about. We are talking about the dangers in Bill 41, the built in dangers.

MR. SIMMS:

That is not new.

MR. NEARY:

It is new. Mr. Speaker, when I see a dangerous situation I recognize it. And it may not seem likely, but my job is to protect the Public Treasury in this Province and that is what I intend to do. My job is to protect the Public Treasury from being gouged by greedy individuals who want to get their arms around the world. They want everything: They want the offshore, they want the building supplies, they want the convention centre. What about that one? How did they manoeuvre that into the hands of Mr. Ryan, the Convention Centre? They cleverly found a way to do it and then provided him with \$1 million of taxpayer money.

MR. SIMMS:

The city supports it too.

MR. NEARY:

The city supports it? The city supports a convention centre, but not necessarily that one.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, yes, they do.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing emerge here is the Ryan Dobbin dynasty, aided and abetted by the Premier of this Province, their buddy, their pal.

MR. YOUNG:

He still thinks he is the leader.

MR. SIMMS:

He is the best leader they ever had.

MR. NEARY:

Who is the best leader they ever had?

MR. SIMMS:

You. We were just talking and Haig said: 'He still thinks he is the leader, and I said, "He is the best leader they ever had over there."

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, if I were the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young) who is the one, by the way, who should have been introducing this bill - the minister was in his seat and he should have been introducing this bill because he is the minister who has to carry out its terms and conditions; but I guess they were too ashamed to put him up so they let the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor) do it - but if I were the Minister of Public Works who has to enforce local preference I would not talk too much about local preference because the hon. gentleman buys his caskets outside the Province.

He refuses to buy his caskets from a local firm. There is only one company in Newfoundland producing caskets of various kinds.

MR. SIMMS:

Who is that?

MR. NEARY:

That is in Carbonear. And the hon. gentleman is discriminating against that company.

MR. YOUNG:

Because he is the treasurer of the Liberal Party of Carbonear.

MR. NEARY:

Exactly. There we have it all.

MR. YOUNG:

People refuse to be buried in a Liberal casket.

MR. NEARY:

Now, Mr. Speaker, that matter may be the subject of a human rights case in this Province so I am not going to comment further on it except to say that the hon. the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young) should be the last one in the House to talk about local preference.

MR. YOUNG:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

On a point of order, the hon. the Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify something because it will be on the records. The gentleman the hon. member is referring to is a sub-agent for a Mainland firm. I must say it is probably bad policy to say this, but I have not had good relations with that Mainland firm and I have refused to buy caskets from the hon.

gentleman who is to agent in this Province.

MR. SIMMS:

They are not local caskets.

MR. YOUNG:

They are not local caskets.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Are the corpses local?

MR. YOUNG:

Yes, all local, Mr. Speaker, and dead when they are disposed of.

MR. NEARY:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

This is a rather dead subject, Mr. Speaker, but I have to remind the hon. gentleman that we only have one firm in Newfoundland that makes caskets and it is the one to which the hon. gentleman referred.

MR. SIMMS:

They do not make them.

MR. NEARY:

They do make caskets. And it is the one firm that the hon. gentleman -

MR. TOBIN:

That is none of your business, that is a private thing.

MR. NEARY:

Well, I am just talking about local preference. The hon. gentleman can buy them where he likes, but as long as the hon. gentleman keeps interrupting me I will remind him that he is the one to has to enforce the local preference and if the hon.

gentleman cannot buy caskets that are made locally, Mr. Speaker, how do we expect him to enforce this act?

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

To that point of order, there is no point of order. The hon. minister took the opportunity of explaining his position on a point brought up by the hon. member.

MR. NEARY:

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that I have sufficiently made the point. I do not know if the message has gotten through to hon. gentlemen there opposite, whether the member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) understands what it is I am talking about, or do I have to recap, repeat what I said for the benefit of the hon. gentleman.

MR. TOBIN:

I understand, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY:

The hon. gentleman understands? Then will the hon. gentleman get up and make a contribution to this debate and show us how well he understands it, show us that he supports an administration that is punching holes in the Public Tendering Act that you could drive a bulldozer through?

Mr. Speaker, they are giving themselves the authority to make regulations down on the eighth floor of Confederation Building. Let me read the section.

"The Lieutenant-Governor in Council may make regulations for carrying out the purpose and the provisions of this act into effect, and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing may make regulations (a) for the

evaluation of bids and prescribing if necessary different procedures for the evaluation of bids in relation to provincial preference policy; (b) for the calculation of the provincial overhead allowance?" What does that mean, 'the calculation of the provincial overhead allowance?' That was the basis under which Dobbin's company, Olympia, was given that \$12 million contract on the Burin hospital.

MR. TOBIN:
Local preference.

MR. NEARY:
No, we were told in this House that it was the provincial overhead allowance. Now what does that mean? Could the hon. member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) explain to me how this works, the provincial overhead allowance? I am listening, let the hon. gentleman tell me. I am listening now. I want to get it from the hon. gentleman who seems to be a bit of an expert on this.

MR. TOBIN:
I am not an expert on it but I know what goes on in my district.

MR. NEARY:
I see. He knows what goes on in his district. Now could the hon. gentleman explain to me the provincial overhead allowance?

MR. TOBIN:
Do you want to take your seat?

MR. NEARY:
No, I want the hon. gentleman to tell me from his seat what is meant by the provincial overhead allowance because that was the basis under which Dobbin's company was given that contract on the Burin hospital.

MR. TOBIN:
You take your seat and I will answer.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
The hon. member does not like speaking from his seat.

MR. NEARY:
The provincial overhead allowance, now that is a new one.

MR. TOBIN:
But I thought you wanted it answered.

AN HON. MEMBER:
That is not new.

MR. NEARY:
It is not new? Well, it is new to me. The first time I heard of it is when we started asking questions about the Burin hospital contract that went to the second lowest bidder.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a clause that can be played with, that is a clause that can be stretched any way you want to stretch it, that is a clause that can give you an out to give your pals, your financial supporters, you bag men, to give them the contracts.

MR. YOUNG:
Practically all the contractors in the Province are Tories so it makes no difference to anybody.

MR. NEARY:
I am talking about two individuals who have a group of companies that are getting a stranglehold on the public treasury.

MR. ANDREWS:
It is all laid down with the regulations.

MR. NEARY:
Mr. Speaker, what are the

projects? There is the convention centre, there is the Burin hospital.

MR. WINDSOR:

What has the Convention Centre got to do with the provincial preference?

MR. NEARY:

The convention centre has all to do with it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WINDSOR:

We have not even awarded contracts yet.

MR. NEARY:

The hon. gentleman has awarded the contract to Ryan's company.

MR. WINDSOR:

We have not.

MR. NEARY:

Well, maybe you should talk to the Premier about it.

MR. WINDSOR:

That was just a proposal.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I saw the news conference.

MR. WINDSOR:

So did I. I was there.

MR. NEARY:

I saw the news conference where the Premier sat down at the head table - the first time I have ever seen it in Newfoundland or anywhere else in the world - and announced a political plum, a bit of patronage, for the provincial co-ordinator of the Tory Party and invited him to sit at the head table with the Premier. That is the kind of dangerous situation I am talking about.

MR. WINDSOR:

Are you against a convention centre? Why do you not tell the tourism industry you do not want tourists?

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I am all for a convention centre and I am all for local preference but I am opposed to the kind of pork barrelling, political patronage and favoritism that we are seeing developing in this Province today. That is what I am against. It is very distasteful, very distasteful indeed.

We had another example recently where the government in keeping with its policy, the only administration in Canada that has it, is giving the Premier a rent-free apartment.

MR. DINN:

You have that beaten to death.

MR. NEARY:

No, I do not have it beaten to death. Were tenders called for that apartment?

MR. DINN:

Were tenders called for your house?

MR. NEARY:

My house is my own business. I paid for it out of my own pocket, my own hard work. I am talking about taxpayers' money.

MR. YOUNG:

Not your own money.

MR. NEARY:

Is that so? It was not the hon. gentleman's. It did not come from the funeral home. It is my own hard earned cash, Mr. Speaker, and not taxpayers' money. The hon. gentleman can try to twist it around to say that this is personal, that we are intruding

into his personal life, but when you are spending taxpayers' money it is not personal, it is public and the taxpayers have a right to know. No tenders were called for that apartment. First of all, the policy is wrong. We are the only Province in Canada that does it. And the hon. gentleman has refused so far to tell us what other services are being provided. Is there a housekeeper? Who supplies the drapes? Who supplies the furniture? Who pays the heat and light bill?

MR. WINDSOR:

Who pays for the house on Roaches Line?

MR. NEARY:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we can tell the hon. gentleman who pays for the house on Roaches Line. Let me clear that matter up for the benefit of the hon. gentleman.

MR. YOUNG:

Tell us if the furniture and appliances were tendered for in that one?

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, that house was privately owned by a former Premier of this Province. Hon. gentlemen can go down in the registry office, search the mortgage and, I suppose, it is the only time in political history of this Province that a former Premier gave the people a house for one dollar.

MR. WINDSOR:

He did?

MR. NEARY:

Yes, he did.

MR. WINDSOR:

Who gave it to him?

MR. TULK:

What do you mean, 'who gave it to him?' He built it himself, I suppose.

MR. YOUNG:

What about the 4,000 acres of land?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, it was built by a former Premier. The hon. gentleman can sling all the dirt and filth he wants on the table but he will get no marks. Go down to the registry office and find out who built it. You will find a mortgage on that house.

MR. DINN:

How much was the mortgage?

MR. NEARY:

I have no idea and I do not care because it was a private and personal matter. And that Premier gave or sold the house to the people for one dollar.

MR. DINN:

When he dies.

MR. NEARY:

No, Sir! No, siree! That is not so. Let us get that straight in our minds. There is no comparison to what the Premier is doing today and what the Premier did then because that house was privately owned. We are talking about taxpayers' money and he gave the house to the people for one dollar.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Was it privately built?

MR. NEARY:

Yes, it was privately built? If the hon. gentleman has something to say, has charges to make, let him make them. That house was

privately built.

MR. MORGAN:

Yes, it was built by his friends, contractors who got business from government. We all know that.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I have no idea, I have no knowledge that anybody gave anything to that house other than what was paid for out of his own pocket, out of his own personal money, by a former Premier of this Province.

MR. YOUNG:

Yes, out of public funds.

MR. NEARY:

Is that so? That is more than you can say. But even if it were look at the asset that was given to the people for one dollar.

MR. YOUNG:

What about all the land he got, 4,000 acres?

MR. NEARY:

So there is no comparison, Mr. Speaker. This is not a personal matter, this is not a private matter, this is a matter of accounting to the taxpayers for taxpayers' money that is taken out of the public treasury and spent on that apartment over at Tiffany Lane.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You are jealous, that is all.

MR. NEARY:

Yes, I am kind of jealous all right. And if the hon. the Premier wants privacy let him go and pay for it the same as every other citizen of this Province does.

MR. BARRETT:

You be careful.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I do not have to be careful. The hon. gentleman can point his finger all he wants. The hon. gentleman had better be careful. Mr. Speaker, I do not have to be careful about anything. My business is open, aboveboard for anybody to scrutinize.

MR. YOUNG:

That is now. What about the past?

MR. NEARY:

Yes, what about it?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) sue (inaudible).

MR. NEARY:

Is that so? The hon. gentleman has not sued me yet. Mr. Speaker, I am still waiting for the summons to be served, I am still waiting for it. If I were the hon. gentleman I would just keep quite because I have a few more little goodies for the hon. gentleman yet.

MR. MORGAN:

If they sued you for brains they would not get very much.

MR. NEARY:

Is that so?

So, Mr. Speaker, there is no comparison. Sometimes they try to muddy up the water. I suppose there were 100 calls on Open Line the other day. Ninety-nine of them said the Premier should not do what he is doing but the first one said, 'What about Mr. Smallwood?'

MR. MORGAN:

By the way, is Bill Rowe going to run for the Liberals now? He changed his mind about running for us.

MR. NEARY:

Maybe I will give my hon. friend from Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) a little lesson in history. The first caller said, 'What about Mr. Smallwood?' Does the hon. gentleman realize what happened to Mr. Smallwood's house, which he himself owned personally, the people did not own it, he had it built himself?

MR. FENWICK:

Why are you speaking to me?

MR. NEARY:

I just want to give the hon. gentleman some information just in case the hon. gentleman may fall into that trap sometime. That house was built privately and given to the people for one dollar. But, Mr. Speaker, let me also tell -

MR. MORGAN:

It was not given to the people. There were terms and conditions that it be passed over to the Crown upon the death of him or his wife whoever lasted longer.

MR. YOUNG:

Look at all the land he got in exchange, 4,000 acres.

MR. CHAIRMAN (McNicholas):

Order, please!

MR. NEARY:

No, it was sold to the government for one dollar with the provision that Mr. and Mrs. Smallwood could live in it until they die. The people own the house.

MR. TULK:

They own it now.

MR. NEARY:

They own it now. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me say something else about it. That was an unfair

deal. Frank Moores, when he was Premier, passed an Order-in-Council - one of his last actions - to hand that house back to Mr. Smallwood because he felt it was unfair, to pass it back to him for the same price of one dollar. Now what did the present Premier do when he came in? He came in and he rescinded Mr. Moores' order and then made another Cabinet Directive to give himself Mount Scio House rent free, compliments of the taxpayers. That is what you call compassion.

MR. TOBIN:

What has that got to do with Bill 41?

MR. NEARY:

It has all to do with it.

MR. TOBIN:

He is out of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY:

So, Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about is a very, very dangerous situation indeed. The Public Tendering Act was quite adequate to take care of the situation. The hon. gentlemen now are using local preference - and I am all for local purchases and I am all for local employment - but hon. gentlemen are using these bills, these amendments, as an escape hatch. They are using them to give themselves a little flexibility. The hon. gentleman talked about raising the amount from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to give the officials in his department a little flexibility. Well, what the hon. gentleman is doing with these amendments is giving the government flexibility to dole out patronage, public dollars, to pork barrel and to show favoritism. And we have seen enough, in the last year or year and a half or

two years, of the two gentlemen I mentioned trying to get their arms around the world. They are in every sector now and the Premier is dangerously close, too close for comfort, to that situation.

MR. TOBIN:

How can you say all that when you know that this act is to clean up everything, that there will be no such thing as helping friends or anything?

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, you know I did not think the hon. gentleman was so naive and gullible.

MR. TULK:

Yes you did.

MR. NEARY:

Well, I probably did.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the real danger in the act is clause 8, the regulations for the calculation of the provincial overhead allowance, the provincial labour content. Something else I have to say, by the way, in connection with the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young) and the contract for the Burin hospital. The hon. gentleman, in reply to a question that I asked in this House when I said to him one day, 'Who are the owners of Olympia?' said, 'I do not know and it is none of my business.' Now he had just got finished telling us that this contract was given out because the company was owned by local people, local preference and then I said to the hon. gentleman, 'Who owns the other companies that bid?' He said, 'I do not know and I do not care, it is none of my business.' How could the hon. gentleman award a contract of the basis of local preference if he did not know who owned the company?

AN HON. MEMBER:

The officials would know.

MR. NEARY:

So the officials knew but the hon. gentleman did not.

MR. TOBIN:

He said he did not remember the shareholders.

MR. NEARY:

He said he did not know and it was none of his business.

MR. YOUNG:

(Inaudible) so much for work (inaudible). I am not down in Panama.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, what a gigantic joke and a bluff. The hon. gentleman knew who the owner of the company was.

MR. TULK:

He still does not know.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, all of these things are hush-hush. All of these things are decided behind closed doors, in privacy and in secrecy. They used to go to Mount Pearl to the Chateau Park Motel to meet the first couple of years. I do not know where they take place now, probably in Tiffany Towers or Tiffany Lane.

MR. YOUNG:

I have not been in Chateau Park since I was born.

MR. NEARY:

No, not the hon. gentleman but the Premier was there.

MR. TOBIN:

Why are you against Newfoundland firms? Why are you against Newfoundland companies?

MR. MORGAN:

All you have to do is ask his colleague, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), why he is against Newfoundland companies because he is trying to put one in bankruptcy right now, Crosbie Offshore, for a European company.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I am all for Newfoundland companies. But what I would say to hon. gentleman there opposite is see if the work is being spread around or is it being concentrated in the hands of two or three people.

MR. TOBIN:

I think there were about nine different contractors in my district this year.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, on the basis of the track record so far of the administration, I would say it is a very, very dangerous game they are playing. They are opening up The Public Tendering Act in this Province to all kinds of abuse and they are giving themselves the authority to go down on the eighth floor of Confederation Building and make whatever regulations they like. They can give themselves all the flexibility they want and they can dole out all the patronage. They will find ways to do it. If you are devious enough, as I said before in an earlier debate, you can find a way to get around The Public Tendering Act and hon. gentlemen have found that way. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, in the days and weeks and months ahead that we will see the companies and the individuals that I mentioned earlier fatten and prosper and expand and grow much to the dismay of the taxpayers of this Province. Because by opening

up the public tendering, by giving everybody a fair crack at it, the taxpayers of this Province could save literally millions of dollars every year if they would stop playing and monkeying around with The Public Tendering Act, Mr. Speaker. I do not think I have left any doubt in anybody's mind where I stand on this kind of legislation. I am all for local preference and I am all for local employment and I am all for local purchases, but, Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to a couple of individuals in this Province creating the dynasty that we are seeing now being created. Upper Salmon, a scandal as far as I am concerned, the Burin hospital, the convention center, the Military Museum, the offshore, building supplies and you can go on and on and on. Get your arms around the world, get a stranglehold on the public treasury, Mr. Speaker, and that is the thing that concerns me about these amendments more than anything else.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

The hon. the Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG:

I close the debate now, Mr. Speaker?

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Did he speak on it already?

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

No, the hon. the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young) can close

the debate. It was introduced on his behalf by the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor). It is his bill.

MR. FENWICK:

So he will close debate on it anyway?

MR. SPEAKER:

Yes.

MR. FENWICK:

In that case I would like to speak.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

I do not have a huge amount to say about it. I have no major disagreement with the bill but I thought it was important to at least put it on the record because myself and the member for Humber West (Mr. Baird) have always had our disagreements about certain kinds of policies and there is a tendency to say that both myself and my party are against local preference. While there is a specific thing that we are against it is not this particular piece of legislation. I have just now gotten a copy of the regulations actually and it makes a lot more sense when you can actually read the regulations. There are only a couple of comments and maybe these are questions actually. Maybe when the minister closes the debate he can address himself to them. On page 7 of draft Bill 41, Regulations, clause 8: 'without limiting the generality of the foregoing, may make regulations,' - and then they talk about the regulations you can make and - "(c) determining raw material that is mined or harvested in the province;" in it. I know this is a particularly arcane one but I was just wondering to what extent

that is carried. For example, speaking for my own district which produces iron ore and so on and so forth, is there an advantage to be had for a company that can definitely say that the steel it is using in a project is made from our iron ore? I am just wondering how far you would go on it. I doubt if you would go that far but I thought if you could address it it might be worthwhile. Anyway that is only a minor point that came up when I was looking at it.

One thing I would like to address because I think it is a particularly good way of going about the particular issue. As I said, the member for Humber West (Mr. Baird) and myself have had our disagreements about local preference, but in the regulations I see that provincial labour content is one of the things that is worked into the formula for determining which particular bidder will get a particular contract offered by the government or by any of its agencies. And I like the way in which it is approached here because what it says is that if you are willing to employ more and more people who are normally resident in the Province, then you will have a much better chance of winning the contract if indeed yours was within 15 per cent of the winning bid, if I am reading the thing correctly. So if 50 per cent of your labour is from the Province and someone else has 75 per cent, that person with 75 per cent labour would be in a better position if their labour costs were better.

MR. WINDSOR:

You would get more credit towards your account based on that, but that is only one of the factors.

MR. FENWICK:

I know it is only one of the factors but it happens to be a particularly good one because what I think it does is it induces on the part of employers involved here an advantage in them having as many people as possible involved with it. I did not have a chance to go through the regulations that closely to see how it works, but it gets a bit complicated when you get to Appendixes 5, 6 and 7 in the regulations. I apologize because I do not believe they have been tabled yet. Is the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor), going to be tabling these?

MR. WINDSOR:

Yes.

MR. FENWICK:

Beyond that the only other area that I would have some questions on is the whole question of the schedule at the back of Bill 41. The same question essentially I would like to raise here, as I raised with The Public Tendering Act, is that the schedule includes a large list of organizations that will now be bound by it and I am wondering whether the same thing happened with that particular group as happened with the Public Tendering Act. And, indeed, were they consulted in terms of how they are going to be able to work within this local preference policy? And if they have, maybe the ministers, if they they are listening, could inform me whether or not they actually have been involved in discussing it.

Beyond that I cannot say as much as the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) about skulduggery involved with it. Having looked at the act itself and looked at the regulations, they seem to be

reasonably straightforward. They seem to be trying to accomplish something that I think all of us would see as desirable and that is to employ as many local persons as possible on these projects, and to make sure that local entrepreneurs get the preference even if they are slightly about the rest.

So I think from that point of view it is really a very positive sign. And the minister, in introducing the legislation, I believe suggested that we are only talking about 2 per cent additional costs in terms of using the local preference policy, and that again seems to be a reasonable thing.

But I would like to know from any minister who wants to reply if we have a copy of a list of the bidders who have been successful in this particular respect. Who have, for example, submitted a bid that was not the lowest bid but had been chosen because of it the policy? Is there documentation that would back that up?

MR. WINDSOR:

Do you want a list of these companies?

MR. FENWICK:

Yes, the companies that have benefitted by this particular policy in the past, so we would have some idea.

MR. WINDSOR:

When the minister closes the debate he will table all that.

MR. FENWICK:

So we will have that information. That is about the only other thing that I would like, because I think that would be a useful way of attacking the problem that the previous speaker raised, and that

is how do we know whether the local preference policy is being used, to use his expression, as a means of repaying certain individuals who may have at times given favours to whichever administration which then is in a position to reward them.

MR. BAIRD:

In your heart and soul, do you really believe that?

MR. FENWICK:

In my heart and soul I believe people are capable of anything. I think the purpose of the Legislature is to pass laws and regulations to keep people from stooping to their worst nature.

The thing that I still hope for, and I know I hope against hope this being 18 December, is to see an Elections Act come down the line within the next day or so. I know that is pretty well futile now because I doubt whether we will be sitting long enough to deal with it. But I still repeat the same comment I made on the Public Tendering Act, and that is really the proper way to nail the hole shut is not just to pass this Local Preference Act and The Public Tendering Act, but to pass a very strong Elections Act so that it can be proved by the government in power that there is no connection between the way in which these contracts have been awarded and any contributions that may have been received in the past. I think, that is still the best way to do it. That is why I lament that we do not see an Elections Act coming down because I think that would be sort of a companion piece to these particular pieces of legislation, and it would allow the administration opposite to demonstrate how they have not done

any of the things that the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has accused them of doing, and so on and so forth.

But that is really about the only comments I had on it, other than to say, and I repeat it again because I know it is important to do that - is the member for Humber West (Mr. Baird) around now?

AN HON. MEMBER:

No.

MR. FENWICK:

Oh, I see. He popped in and he popped out, unfortunately. I would like to say unequivocally that myself and the party I represent are in favour of this particular piece of legislation which calls for local preference. We have been in favour of it not only for the contractors, although we think it is important that they be favoured, but also for the fact that there is a very definite section in it that gives an advantage to companies that employ as much local labour as possible, and we are pleased to see that in the legislation. I say that for the record. And I am really disappointed the member for Humber West is not here to listen to it, but the fact of the matter is we do approve of that kind of legislation and hope that it will not be abused.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

If the hon. the minister now speaks, he will close the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Public Works.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. YOUNG:

First, I want to thank the hon.

the Minister for Development (Mr. Windsor) for introducing the bill. Unfortunately I was out of the chamber at the time. I would just like to respond to some of the questions asked by the hon. the member for Menihok (Mr. Fenwick). I know he can be confused with the malarkey that the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) goes on with, bringing in caskets and all this old foolishness, and accusing us of various things.

But, Mr. Speaker, this local preference policy is directly linked with The Public Tendering Act and it will come into effect, as the minister said, when the Public Tendering Act is proclaimed. The Department of Development, Mr. Speaker, will have extensive input into that, and the legislation from time to time will be received by the Department of Public Works and Services.

Now getting back to some of the questions asked by the hon. member, I will be tabling the guidelines and also when it is printed, we will have the list of some of the firms who have benefitted through this local preference policy. Mr. Speaker, members opposite said The Public Tendering Act has been watered down, but The Public Tendering Act mainly resulted from our implementation of the recommendations of the Mahoney Commission.

For instance, for the hon. member's benefit, when we built the Confederation Building Extension and all our hospitals we specified that the brick must be local, so at least we kept these people in the Clarenville area of Trinity Bay employed. I think

there were about twenty-nine employees who produced something like three-quarters of a million bricks for the extension. All the local materials we can get we purchase under this local preference policy. The member asked about the labour content and whether it applies to such manufactured goods as steel for some of the buildings and so forth. If it is manufactured here in the Province, although the raw material is imported, the labour content applies; an example would be trusses made here from imported material. Local preference is determined on a scale of 0 to 10, and applies when the difference in bids is not beyond the 15 per cent limit.

The local preference policy also applies to subcontractors and is beneficial to them when they use local materials and labour. That is all taken into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to move second reading of this bill.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Provide For The Calculation And Consideration Of The Provincial Content Factor In The Awarding Of Tenders By Government Funded Bodies," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 41).

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Schools Act", (Bill No. 55).

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

The hon. the Minister of Education.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

I am pleased to introduce this bill in the House of Assembly and to speak to the principle of the bill. The bill relates to two important subjects in education; the first is the composition of school boards, and the second is the provision of school services to children from the age of five on, and, in particular, the offering of kindergarten to children who reach the age of five before the end of the calendar in which the school year starts.

Mr. Speaker, the present Schools Act required that at least one-third of school board members be elected by popular vote. This provision was put in place at the end of the 1960s when the administration of education in our Province was restructured in the wake of the Warren Royal Commission report. One of the major changes implemented was the consolidation of school boards. Formerly there had been literally hundreds of small local school boards. Virtually every small school, and there were way more schools then than there are now, had its own school board. At that point school boards were consolidated and there were brought into existence thirty-five centralized regional school boards which were then affiliated with the various religion denominations which have constitutional rights and legal rights in education in our Province and, Mr. Speaker, that legal situation has continued to this day.

The leaders in education in the 1960s, who drafted the present act, many of whom are still involved in our school system, tell me that at that time it was

intended that one-third, as the minimum of school board members who had to be elected by popular vote, be simply the start, and that in the years to follow that minimum be increased beyond one-third.

Mr. Speaker, in practice now many more than one-third of our school board members or school trustees are elected. In fact, at the moment, roughly 60 per cent of our school board members are elected. Now, while something more than one-third have been elected in accordance with the act and the regulations under the act, many of the others, to make up the total of 60 per cent, were elected more informally, generally at meetings called for the purpose of choosing school board members; for example, a parish meeting advertised which could be attended by all eligible voters, or a meeting in a school auditorium, likewise publicized and open to all qualified voters.

So, Mr. Speaker, right now 60 per cent of our school board members, that is 311 of the 517 school board members, have been elected. And, Mr. Speaker, all school board members serve four year terms and are eligible to serve more than one term.

The last time that there were general elections under the act and regulations right across the Province was May of 1982. At that time, 236 school board seats in 33 of the 35 school boards were up for election. That is 236 of the school board seats in 33 of the 35 school boards were advertised for election. There was publicity about the conditions of the elections, the criteria for candidacy, the qualifications for voting. But, Mr. Speaker, the results of those elections were

very disappointing. What happened, in fact, is that of those 236 seats, one-third did not attract even one nominee and, therefore, those seats were really forfeited to the democratic process and, in accordance with the law, were later filled by a subjective selection process by de facto or appointment. Another one-third of those 236 seats drew only one candidate and therefore those seats were filled by acclamation. So, Mr. Speaker, that left only one-third where there were contests, where there were more than two candidates and, sadly, even in those cases, very few people voted. So even though something like 60 per cent of our present school board members were elected, 311 out of 517, very few people took part in those electoral processes.

Mr. Speaker, school boards are local government in education under the provincial legal and regulatory framework that is provided by the Department of Education and the provincial government on the one hand and the churches, who have constitutional powers, on the other. School boards make most of the decisions that are important to children in classrooms. Furthermore, school boards, through their local school tax authorities, levy taxes. And, Mr. Speaker, it is the position of this government that more of the members of the general public of the Province, more of our citizens, should be participating in those school board decision-making processes, for a start should be taking part in school board elections.

Mr. Speaker, we may ask ourselves, Why is it that only a very small minority of our total population is participating in our school

board system? Is it because people are not concerned about education? No, Mr. Speaker, that certainly is not the case. Public opinion surveys, which have been conducted by various authorities, national and local, one conducted quite recently by professor Phil Warren of the Memorial Faculty of Education, point out that people in Newfoundland and Labrador have a very deep interest in education and regard education as a key determinant in people's success in life. So it has been shown clearly that the population of our Province are interested in and care about our schools.

MR. TULK:

Is it just apathy?

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk), the surveys have shown that the population of Newfoundland and Labrador attach a great deal of importance to education and they care deeply about our schools. So, Mr. Speaker, it is not because of any lack of interest, or apathy, on the part of the public by and large that so few of them are taking part in our school board decision-making processes, that so few of them have turned out to vote in school board elections. There has to be some other explanation.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked various people around the Province to give me their explanation and some of the suggestions that have come forward include the fact that very few people understand how our education system works. A lot of people simply do not understand and appreciate the role of school boards.

School boards, after all, as we

now know them, are a relatively recent addition to our political scene, since the restructuring to which I referred earlier occurred only fifteen years ago, but in those short fifteen years school boards have had a low profile. I challenge the members opposite as well as the members on this side of the House to tell me the names of the members of their local school boards. I wonder if the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) can name the members of the Labrador West Integrated School Board or perhaps the Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board?

MR. TULK:

Do you expect any member to be able to do that?

MR. NEARY:

Of course she does not. She is being nasty.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I do not mean to be nasty because I do not expect the member for Menihek to be able to recite any more or fewer of the names of his school board members than the member who sits at my left or any of the members in this House, or any of the general public. The fact is that school board members have had a low profile and the news media do not make a practice of reporting on school board meetings or school board decision-making processes.

Another suggestion that has been put forward to me as an explanation for why so few people vote in school board elections is that the elections are not well-publicized and people have not found it easy or convenient to get out and vote.

So, Mr. Speaker, the changes that are embodied in this bill are

calculated to increase, and increase dramatically, public participation in school board elections, first of all, by increasing the fraction or proportion of elected members. Although when you consider that about 60 per cent of present members were elected in some way, and the increase is to a minimum of only 66-2/3 per cent, that is not a major change; however, it may lead to a change in perception on the part of people who may begin to see that school board members, school trustees, can have an active part in school board decision-making and that they themselves, with their various interests in education and qualifications, can make a very real and valuable contribution to our education system.

The second provision of the bill, which I think will go even further to raise the participation rate in school board elections, is the scheduling of school board elections to coincide with municipal elections. In that way, Mr. Speaker, in our incorporated municipalities, which do accommodate the bulk of the population of the Province, with cooperation between school boards and municipalities it will be possible for polling stations to be set up in the same building so that voters will be able to go to the one location on the one day, cast a ballot for his or her municipal government and then go over to the other side of the room and cast a ballot of his or her choice for the school board of the denomination of which that voter is an adherent and then cast a ballot for his or her school board. Traditionally in this Province we have had a high voter participation rate in municipal elections and it is only

reasonable to assume that that high voter participation rate will carry over to school board elections.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, a question, by leave?

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Does the hon. member have leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave, a question from the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

In putting this bill together, did you do any research to see just what the voting percentage is in municipal elections? Did you manage to get into that? Obviously it should translate.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

The hon. the Minister of Education.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, yes, I did consult with my colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Doyle) and his predecessor, the present Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications (Mrs. Newhook), who informed me in a general way that certainly in the larger municipalities in the Province - I am thinking of St. John's, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls, Stephenville, Happy Valley - Goose Bay, Labrador City - Wabush - there has been a very high voter participation rate in municipal elections and certainly there is no comparison between the voter turn out rate in municipal elections generally and in school board elections generally. Mr. Speaker, I recall that in the last round of school board elections, which as I said before was in May

of 1982, I voted in one of the Avalon Consolidated School Board zones in St. John's. I arrived at a polling station at about five minutes before the polls closed and I was there when voting was cut off and I remember discovering to my dismay that even though there was a lively contest, there were about five people contesting that election, the total voter turn out - now this is from the whole City of St. John's and surrounding areas served by the Avalon Consolidated School Board - only about 300 people. I wonder how many people in this chamber voted even though I am sure most of you were eligible to vote.

So, Mr. Speaker, in determining the proposed new minimum number of elected school board members, the constitutional and legal rights of the churches, were taken into consideration. Two-thirds was chosen as the new minimum so that the participating denominations would still have the right, if they so choose to select up to one-third of the school board members so that they may be sure that their denominational interests are well reflected in the composition of their school boards and their concerns are properly addressed in school board deliberations.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal which is now embodied in the bill before us has been discussed quite thoroughly by me with all the leaders in education in the province over a period of two years. It was on October 27, 1982 that I first raised these ideas in a formal way with the General Advisory Committee. That is a committee established under the Department of Education Act with a mandate of advising the government through the Minister of Education

on all matters of education policy. That committee is made up of the Executive Directors of the Denominational Education Councils, the leaders of the Provincial Federation of School Boards as it was called then - the name has been changed since to Newfoundland and Labrador School Trustees Association - the President and the Executive Director of the Newfoundland Teachers Association, the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Memorial University and a leader of the Provincial Federation of Home and School and Parent/Teachers Associations. Mr. Speaker, the PTA's federation representative on the General Advisory Committee is the past president Renee Gaulton. Mr. Speaker, at about four subsequent meetings of that Committee this proposal was discussed. I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that the Provincial School Trustees Association which encompasses all the school boards, has publicly supported this measure. Just a couple of weeks ago I heard a radio news report quoting a leader of that association expressing full support for this. I think his words were, 'We are all in favour of the measure.'

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn now to the final provisions of the bill which have to do with the provision of schooling for children from the age of five. Mr. Speaker, the law makes it discretionary on the part of school boards to offer kindergarten and to take into school children who are under the age of six. The practice, however, as I am sure we all know is that kindergarten is universally available and it is widely assumed that parents have a responsibility to have their children in school once they

become five. Mr. Speaker, the contents of this bill propose to change the law to accord with or to be the same as the practice and that is to make it not discretionary but obligatory or mandatory for school boards to offer kindergarten and to admit to school children once they become five so that at the start of each school year school boards have to take into school all children who are then five or who turn five before the end of that calendar year. Mr. Speaker, I should point out that the bill has one inaccuracy quite crucial due to a printing error which I intend to have rectified at the committee stage. Page 5, clause 3 (1) should say: 'A School Board 'shall' establish kindergarten classes in a school to teach and train children who are five years on or before the thirty-first day of December in that school year.' So, Mr. Speaker, to sum up, I believe that the provisions of this bill as they relate to changes in the compositions of school boards and the manner of electing school board members on the one hand and in the requirement of school boards to offer kindergarten and take into school children from the age of five are progressive measures which will meet with the favour and approval of the parents and general public of this Province.

Thank you.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the minister in making a few little comments on this bill that

certainly we on this side of the House are not going to vote against the bill, absolutely not. As a matter of fact, I believe where it is possible - and I realize the stake the churches have - we should try to elect all school board members, although I realize that there are some complications in the Province with that. So we will certainly be voting for the bill.

In regards to kindergarten, the minister made a very wise decision by having the word 'may' changed to 'shall', because that is basically what she was saying out of one side of her mouth, and I was saying to myself, 'How can she do that?'

MS VERGE:

That is just a drafting error.

MR. TULK:

It is a drafting error. And it should certainly be the point that the school boards 'shall' rather than 'may' establish kindergarten classes in this Province. As I said, I am not going to take too long. The minister reviewed the period of consolidation that took place in the early 1960s as a result of the Warren Commission. Another note I made was she said that 60 per cent of school board members were elected.

MS. VERGE:

Are now elected.

MR. TULK:

Yes, are now elected, and she went on to get into that as well. What really happens in Newfoundland is that the democratic process is followed in the election of very few of our school board members and I think there are a couple of reasons for that.

Let me say to the minister that there are many people in this Province today who are wondering, and quite legitimately, which has nothing to do with the person who is the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) but certainly has to do with the department itself, just what the duties of the Minister of Education are. It is very debatable just how much power the Minister of Education in this Province has to rectify any situation.

MR. CARTER:

You are attacking the minister. You are getting personal.

MR. TULK:

No, I am not saying anything about the present Minister of Education (Ms. Verge), I am not being personal at all, I am just talking about an office that has been established, something that has happened as a result of the consolidation of school boards. And I do not think we have learned adequately how to deal with that problem. The Minister of Education has very little to say for example, about school busing. The Minister of Education has very little to say about the way that money is spent. The IECs, as the minister says when she passes out money, are the people who determine where that money is going to be spent and so on. Really the essential component of the Department of Education today seems to be in curriculum development, and perhaps that is its biggest role. And there are very few protections, I tell the minister as a former teacher and also as a citizen, for people in communities against school boards. While I am for consolidation of school boards, somehow or other we have to work out a system whereby people who

are superintendents in this Province, who are building their own little empires at the expense of the Minister of Education and sometimes at the expense of the people and contrary to the wishes of the people, I would like to see an example where one superintendent in this Province was fired. I do not care who it is as long as it is justified, as I suggested to the Minister last year in this House. I would like to see one superintendent in this Province fired so that we could establish that indeed school boards do have some power. Now it may have happened in the last six to eight months, I do not know, but I do not believe it has. I do not believe there has ever been a superintendent in Newfoundland fired. I do not think so. I have never heard of one. Yet if you are a superintendent on the Mainland of Canada or in the United States, well, you are a sitting duck, every morning you get up to get fired. It seems to me that one of the things that has happened as a result of the consolidation of school boards in the Province is that of people lost contact with their school board, and I would suggest to the minister that that is primarily the reason why people are not voting in school board elections, because they have lost touch with something that they had. It is a fact of history that in Newfoundland, especially in the outports, the school was there and the school board was there, all in the same community, and it was a vital part of that community. Now what we have - I am not saying we should not have it, I am just relating to the minister the reason that I believe people do not get involved - is a school board located at a central point, perhaps sixty or seventy miles

from the community in which the school is situated, and the people in that community feel very little power when it comes to controlling the affairs of what happens in their schools. You can add to that the fact that you have superintendents in this Province who are building their own little empires, as they are, and I can give the minister case after case after case where it is happening and I am sure she can too. Superintendents control the information for school boards, and, as the minister knows and as everybody in this House knows, the guy or the woman with the information, the person with the information is the person who has the power absolutely. The make-up of school boards is such that you get a guy or a woman who has to work from daylight to dark to make a living, who perhaps get two or three hours a day, if they are lucky, to spend at school board business, who find themselves sitting at a board table where the mastermind is the superintendent, because his job is to get all the information he can get, and the person who has the information is the person in control. I have had occasions to fight school boards even when I was principal. I can tell you now that anybody who goes before a school board with a good superintendent, I mean good in the sense that he is capable of handling himself and so on, hoping to win a case or make a point is whistling in the dark because the superintendent has the information fed to the school board members just like he wants it. It happens all the time. It is politics. There are more politics played at the school board level than there are in this House. So we have got to find some way in this Province of Newfoundland to make our school boards answerable to the people

they represent because they are not answerable now. I would like the minister to tell me how she monitors the election of school boards. How does she herself as the Minister of Education, that office, monitor the election of school boards? What kind of check is done to see what kind of advertising is done? On what page in what paper is it hidden, and so on? Just how much of it is done? Because it is a very great advantage to a superintendent to be able really to appoint - he can call it what he likes - his school board members. Those may seem like serious accusations but I know it is happening in the Province. To be quite frank with the minister, I would like for somebody with some political skills, organizational skills, to go out and take on a school board, just one school board, and see what becomes of the two-thirds elected school board members quota the minister is now introducing. I believe as a result you would have a superintendent who would be more responsible to his people, to the people he is serving, namely the parents and the kids who live in his district, and I believe you would have a far more functional system. I want to make those points to the minister because I believe those are the reasons that you hear people say, "Nobody ran for the school board. Nobody ran for office." Or even if they did, nobody voted. Because what is the point? For example, where I live you will hear people say, "Well, it is all done in Gander anyway. It is all done in that board office anyway." And we know what we are talking about; we are talking about superintendents, the influence they have on school board members and, as a result, their influence on schools and on what happens in them.

Trying to get a superintendent in this Province to change his mind if he does not want to is the same as whistling past the graveyard from the start. I know that when you go to a school board table to take a superintendent on, you may as well make up your mind you are going to lose. There has been many occasions, as the minister knows, when I have done that.

Before I sit down I would like to raise a couple of other questions for the minister to answer when she closes the debate about her plan to hold elections for school board members at the same time as municipal elections. There are still many communities in this Province that are not incorporated, so what happens in that particular case? How do we cut out the inequality that can come about as a result of not having a municipal election at the same time? I do not know whether I should stand in this House and say this or not, it is not politically wise to say what I am now going to say, but if you look at many of the communities in Newfoundland I think you will find that the guy or the lady who is the mayor or councillor is also the person who is going to be running for the school board. It is usually the same person because there are not very many people who are interested in running for those offices anyway. As I said, perhaps that is not very popular politically to say. What happens in the case of a person who desires to run for both the municipality and the school board? As I said, the minister can answer that because I am sure she has thought that through.

Now I understand the minister's point that she has left appointment of one-third of school

board members to the churches. The churches in this Province have always had that right and they have it constitutionally, they have certain powers constitutionally, and I can understand that. But I would say to the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) that she should take one school district - I do not care which one it is - concentrate on that, see that an election is held, and then let us see what happens to some of those superintendents who are building their own little empires in Newfoundland, and sometimes I am not sure that they are building them soundest in an educational sense. Neither the Premier of this or any other Province, or any Premier, not even the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) - and I will tell you that is pretty bad - would play some of the small 'p' political games that I have seen superintendents in this Province play. As I say, sometimes it is not for a sound educational reason, it is just to expand his or her own little empire. I do not believe there are very many women superintendents in the Province.

MS VERGE:

Zero.

MR. TULK:

Zero. We almost had one one time; she was a colleague of mine. Sometimes I do not believe the reasons school superintendents carry on the manipulations they do, are educationally sound. And as the minister knows I can give her a few examples of where I believe that to be the case. We will support the bill, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I support the bill to the extent to which it goes and I intend to introduce an amendment in a few minutes when I have discussed some of the general aspects of it. I would like to talk about the bill itself before I get to that.

First of all, I find the section on the clearing up of the age at which a child can go to kindergarten and the age at which a child can go to Grade I totally acceptable and there is no particular problem with it. I think really the substance of this bill is a major change, as the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) has pointed out, to try and increase public participation in the school board election process. And that, as a general objective, I think we can all applaud because we are all, I think, preachers of the democratic process and very much in favour of people having the right to say what kind of political process they have and what kind of government they have have and, of course, what kind of school boards they have. I think that that is a good idea.

In looking at the basic thrust of the bill which is to increase representation, I would suggest that one of the reasons that so few people come forward and so few positions are contested, even when elections are held for the one-third of board members to be elected, is perhaps a demonstration of how ineffective these school board members actually feel they are going to be on a board of which only one-third are elected because, of course,

they become a minority in comparison to the appointed members and really are not decisive in terms of what is going on. I think that may be part of the problem we are looking at.

I also applaud, by the way, the suggestion that we have the school board elections at the same time as the municipal elections. I think that is an excellent idea. I would hope that the municipalities and the school boards would probably cost-share some of the ballot boxes and the work that is being done, the scrutineers and so on, because it seems to me a very simple thing to do that way.

What I probably should do now is go right to the amendment because that is really the whole thrust of what I want to talk about. My motion is: I move, seconded by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), that - I had better read it to you and then I will explain what it says; in Section 1 of the bill, the (a) part, the (b) subsection, the little (i) section that says "shall provide for selection by election" and so on and so forth, delete after the comma and the words 'subject to the regulations, of at least two-thirds of such members,' and then the 'or' and replace that with 'of all members.' So (i) it would now read, 'shall provide for selection by election of all members.' So the amendment is to change from two-thirds to the whole works. In order to be consistent, I believe we would have to delete the corresponding section beyond that which is the (ii) which says: "may provide for selection by election", etc., etc. So the amendment would be to change the (i) section from two-thirds to all members and also

the (ii) section. That has been seconded by the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). Is that in order, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

I am not sure, so I might have to recess for a few minutes. In my experience at least, it is a bit unusual to get an amendment of this kind on second reading. I refer to Beauchesne, page 225, which talks amendments at second reading. It says: "There are three types of amendments that may be proposed at the second reading stage of a bill. These are: The six months' hoist; the reasoned amendment; and the referral of the subject matter to a committee."

MR. FENWICK:

This is a reasoned amendment in my estimation.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

I am not sure. I will hear some argument on it, but I may have to recess.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to that. I do not think it is a reasoned amendment because a reasoned amendment is one that asks for all words after 'that' be deleted and others added. The motion before the Chair now is that this bill be read a second time. On page 226 of Beauchesne it says that all words after 'that' be deleted and something else substituted.

The hon. gentleman is entitled to make a motion of this nature either in committee or in second reading. The Minister of Education (Ms Verge) spoke to the bill it and the government has

reasons why it would not support the amendment. But I see no reason why we cannot introduce it now without creating a precedent and deal with it now rather than in Committee itself, if that has the consent of the House.

MR. FENWICK:

Since the agreement seems to be there we can go ahead. I would argue that it substantially changes the thrust of the bill and that it is not appropriate in Committee stage for that reason. I may be worded a little bit differently because I am not sure of the exact wording. I think you understand what I mean.

MR. MARSHALL:

With leave of the House, we will accept it as it is and dispose of it.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

I have to rule that it is not a reasoned amendment as the hon. member may have thought. But if by leave the House wishes to discuss it now, certainly it is the House's decision.

Is it agreed to deal with it now?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

I will start with the reasons I am moving the amendment right now rather than later.

The first thing I would like to do is to read to the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) at least seven or eight names of school board members just to show that I know some of them: Jim Cochrane, Chairman; Kevin Walsh, Father

Malloy, Father Smith, Father McGrath, Joe Benoit, Ralph White and Priscilla Strickland. So I do know some of them. I am not as good on Labrador West yet but I will get there.

The reason I bring it forward now, and the reason I have to bring it forward now is because our party in open conventions over the last couple of years has repeatedly heard motions, usually passed unanimously, to the effect that all school board members in the Province should be elected, and that is, therefore, an established policy of our party. Since I am sworn by my oath of office as leader of the party to put forward party policy at all opportunity, I am putting it forward. I put it forward not only because it is party policy but also because I believe it is an improvement in terms of the way our educational system would operate. And I think it is important that we do consider this serious question of whether we should continue to have some of our school board members appointed or whether we should take the plunge completely and look at a completely elected board.

I think if we look at our Education Act and we look at the actual preamble to it and so on, what we do find in there are some basic statements of who is responsible for education. The primary agent responsible for education is the parents, the parents of the individuals concerned and they are the ones who are responsible for the education of the children, they are the ones responsible for having the facilities and having adequate education and so on and they express that through the act of electing their school board members. I think it is important

for us to realize that we should not do anything to thwart that control that the parents in our school system have over the entire thing.

I say that because I think it is important that we continue to stress their role in it. I do know that there will be speakers who will perhaps come up and say that this alters the basic character of our education system, maybe somebody might come up and say that it is unconstitutional. I would suggest that that will not be the case. If going from one-third to two-thirds is unconstitutional, I would suggest that going from two-thirds to a complete number is perhaps not, although there may be arguments that we are, in this situation, somehow damaging the denominational education system. I would like to assure all members present that it is not my intention to damage any denominational education system or do any damage to the system that is not repairable and so on.

There are, as members know, many avenues through which the denominational educational system exercises its influence over the school system. We have already had the example, I think, of Fogo where obviously control of the public purse in terms of building schools is part of the process in doing it that way. I think the minister would also recognize there is a lot of input in the Department of Education level in terms of curriculum, in term of the kind of courses that are being offered and so on.

So I do not want to be accused, although I think I might be somewhere along the line, of trying to destroy the

Denominational Education system.

MR. STAGG:

Nobody would say that about you.

MR. FENWICK:

Well, I do not know, boy. Worst have been said.

By doing that, by going to a fully elected board we will in effect say to the parents in a particular area, look, these are your children being educated, you are responsible for their education, you had better take a very, very intense first-hand look at what is being done in this area, and the way that you do that is by making sure that all members elected to the school board have your best interest and the interest of your children at heart, and the only way to do that is by having them all elected. By having some appointed by various other committees and so on, really removes a considerable chunk of the authority that you have. Although I think the argument can be made that now only one-third will be appointed, I think that is a little bit of a simplification. Because, indeed, the one-third that will be appointed will most likely be sort of permanent members, staying there from year to year to year for maybe ten or fifteen years at a time. And we all know that the length of time you spend in any institution generally tends to make you more influential. Although, thinking of the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) in that regard - I know he seconded the motion but he has left - I am beginning to doubt if that is actually true of this House. But I think as a general rule the fact is there is a relationship, I would argue, between tenure in a particular institution and your influence

upon it. In the instances I am aware of, the influence of the appointed members have been quite substantial even to the point of basically being able to direct the affairs of that particular organization. I think that if we stop at two-thirds we still leave a particular group of individuals in a lot of cases, in charge of the whole system and I think that would be unfortunate.

I think of specific examples to buttress that argument. I am not sure if it is a totally elected board so I may be walking into a mine field here. I apologize if I am wrong but I do not think I am. I am referring to the Vinland school board. As many members know the Vinland school board has a number of particular nasty disputes going on, particularly with regard to the community of Raleigh, where a decision was made by the school board to alter the location in which the children in Raleigh at the higher grade levels would be educated despite very, very severe objections from the parents in Raleigh, and the parents objecting despite the fact that they had really not enough control over their own school board in order to do something about it.

PATTERSON:

Who seconded the motion?.

MR. FENWICK:

The member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

MR. PATTERSON:

You tore him to pieces.

MR. FENWICK:

I did not tear him to pieces, that was just a minor aside.

Getting back to the situation with regard to Raleigh, I believe it

actually brought up a wider problem and that was the question of these comprehensive schools of one hundred students or so, going from kindergarten to level 3, being able to offer the kind of curriculum we have now. I think that is a problem that we have not really addressed very well because I think we have actually, with the revised curriculum, created some problems. If we want a wide variety of courses and specialized teachers and so on, a school that has only 100 or 150 students and is trying to offer an education from kindergarten up to level 3 is going to have a difficult time getting the appropriate kind of teachers, for the top grades especially. And this indeed seems to be the problem that occurred at Raleigh and as a result the curriculum they were offering was limited, which is somewhat relevant to the amendment because, if I recall correctly the board member for the Raleigh area was appointed board members, although I think he resigned shortly after the dispute heated up and so on. There is a good question about whether the fact there was a number of people appointed to the Vinland Integrated School Board - I cannot believe they were actually appointed, but that is the information I got when I was up there talking to the people involved - meant a loss of control on the part of the parents and in this particular situation the parents were not able to essentially say they wanted their children educated in their own community, that they were willing to accept a modified curriculum, if necessary, because they believed the benefits of being in their own community, with teachers who could counsel them in the evenings and so on, was worth at least as much as some other

specialized courses that they might be able to receive from the St. Anthony school.

But it seems to me it was a case of the parents themselves clearly expressing their will and being thwarted because the school board itself was not receptive to it. Again I am not sure of the exact situation there, but the impression I had from talking to the people up there was that the school board member for their district was appointed from their particular community.

That gets me back to the main question about why we should have totally elected school boards. I believe that we would encourage much more participation if we finally said to people that as parents you are totally responsible for the education of your children, that you have to elect people who will be sensitive to the kinds of things that you want your children taught, people you essentially control. Maybe there are people within our society who do not wish to go that fast, and I think that is unfortunate, but it seems to me that in a modern society such as we are trying to create here we should not be one of the few jurisdictions with appointed school boards. I do not know how far you would have to go before you found appointed school boards in the rest of North America, but suggest it would be quite a distance, although I am open to argument on that. But it seems to me that we should probably bring ourselves in line, at least to some degree, in accepting a greater degree of responsibility for education.

There is another reason for it, of course, as well, and that is the

one I think the minister alluded to in her opening comments, that school boards now have control to a large extent over the School Tax Authorities in their area. I believe they have representation on it, and as a result of that representation these School Tax Authorities are now in a position to actually levy taxes. I believe the American Revolution was actually fought over the idea of no taxation without representation, but I am not suggesting that we are a bunch of Yankee rebels here. MR. TULK:
Why not?

MR. FENWICK:

We probably would be worse, actually.

Since power of taxation has been granted to the school board, which is something, as most members realize, that has only come about in the last decade or so, perhaps now the argument for appointed school board members becomes much weaker since, indeed, you are electing a person who determines in the future a pretty substantial portion of the taxes you have to pay. And I think on that issues alone there is substantial merit in the idea of going towards a fully elected school board. That is not, by the way, to say that I am particularly enamoured of the whole idea of the

School Tax Authorities. Not that there should not be more money raised for education, I do not argue with that, I think that is very important -

MR. TULK:

They say that gives people local control. Will somebody explain that to me?

MR. FENWICK:

Especially with appointed boards.

MR. TULK:

How does paying school tax gives you local control?

MR. FENWICK:

But anyway, School Tax Authorities are an inefficient way of raising revenue. I am not arguing that taxes should not be raised to pay for our schools, but I think it is inefficient in a sense that we have these authorities all over the Province and I would argue that a more equitable and a more efficient way would be some other general tax, for example, the progressive income tax, which I know may be high now, but it is to me a much more equitable way to raise taxes for our schools.

MR. TULK:

It is our policy to get rid of them.

MR. FENWICK:

It is also the policy, by the way, of the PC Party of this Province, in convention has repeatedly called for abolition of School Tax Authorities. It does not seem to be able to influence its caucus in the House, but that is beside the point.

I am not arguing against it because I do not think that the money should not come from somewhere, but I think a progressive income tax is the most effective way of doing that, and I would like to debate that in terms of what our overhead costs are with these tax authorities and whether we are really paying too much for the collection process, and whether we should be looking at another way of doing it.

Prosperous areas have excellent

schools and enjoy exceptionally favourable circumstances because in the past contributions came from local corporations, but the School Tax Authorities, in my opinion, in places where they really most need money to improve the schools usually have the weakest taxation base to draw on. For example, in St. John's where the taxation base, I would suggest, is probably as high as it is anywhere. The school tax authorities can really demand and get a considerable amount of money from the real estate valuation of the City of St. John's. The same thing is true, I would suggest, of Gander, Corner Brook, Stephenville and other communities like this. Other places, however, which have less resources and are drawing on areas with extremely high unemployment, with a very low real property base and so on, have to tax people in much different ways. In a lot of cases their ability to tax is much poorer. Just to put it in terms that perhaps the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) will relate to favourably, maybe we need an equalization formula between these school tax authorities and I would suggest that getting rid of the school authorities and using the income tax as a means to raising it would be an instant equalization formula since we would then be going after people who are most able to pay.

However, getting back to the original argument, since school boards have control over these taxing agencies they should therefore be responsible to the people they tax, and I think that the only way we can assure that is if the entire slate of people on school boards are elected, and that is the thrust of this particular amendment. I do agree

that it will in the long run change the nature of our education system. I have often felt, looking at the education system that we have tended to become much too academically oriented, I know we have in the past, and we have really to a large extent done little to advance vocational education within our school system, although we certainly have a number of vocational schools which do a good job on students once they have come through the education system. I think that emphasis on an academic education is reflected to a large extent on the priorities of our school board members and to a large extent on these school board members who were appointed and come from a particular point of view with a particular background to it. It seems to me that in the past we have had a school system that tended to be somewhat antiquated, out of date in the sense that it was not really anticipating the skills we would need. With the revision of the curriculum over the last couple of years we have perhaps improved things substantially. I give credit where credit is due and I think there have been improvements. But at the same time the allocation of resources, as the minister has very clearly said, is the responsibility of the school boards and it reflects the priority of the school board members. The priority of the school board members to a large degree should reflect the needs and the interests and the desires of the parents rather than particular other groups who are not as directly, shall we say, held culpable for it by the fact that their children are not being educated in it. I think those are some of the general arguments I would advance for the amendment to

the bill besides the fact that I am honour bound by my oath of office to bring forward that point of view whenever the subject is raised. I honestly believe that it would be a great leap forward - I do not know if I want to use that term. Let us just say it would be like the people who are talking about going to free trade with the United States, maybe it would be an act of faith to go ahead with it, but I think that we would probably find as a result a tremendous renewed enthusiasm for positions on the school boards because then obviously the whole ball game is theirs. They are the ones who are now responsible for the education system within the limits of the legislation, of course outlining our basic framework, and we would probably see less of these noncontested positions and less of these positions for which no candidates at all come forward because we would then be fulfilling a real need.

So those are some of the arguments I would like to put forward for it and I look forward to any arguments that the minister or any other members of the government may put forward their particular point of view.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

The hon. the Minister of Education.

MS VERGE:

To the amendment, Mr. Speaker, I have to first of all say that I believe that the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) is supporting the general objective of the government which I articulated earlier in the debate, namely, that we do whatever is

possible to increase, to boost the participation rate of parents as well as others of our provincial population in school board elections and in school board decision making. As the member has said and I certainly agree by having more people involved, it is reasonable to expect that the decisions will serve better the interest of the children for whom our schools exist. However, we have different positions on degree. Right now the act says that a minimum of only one-third of school board members have to be elected, that is elected according to the legislation and regulations in a formal way. The proposal set forth in the bill, which I am supporting in lieu of the alternative, is that that minimum be increased to two-thirds thereby ensuring that a good, solid majority of school board members be chosen democratically. The alternative that I am rejecting is one contained in the amendment that we go all the way to providing for the election of all school board members. Mr. Speaker, the reasons that the government is not going all the way now are; one, the churches, who have constitutional powers and rights in education, have indicated that they would not favour our going to that extent and requiring that all school board members be elected. The churches want to continue to be able to select some school board members to ensure that their denominational interests are protected. A second reason for proposing the two-thirds minimum is the provision of an orderly and smooth transition, and finally it has to be recognized that many of the school board members who have been chosen subjectively by the churches or by school boards have made an excellent contribution to

school board decision making and it is probably desirable that many of those appointed members be reappointed next November to provide for continuity.

Mr. Speaker, in summary I believe the two-thirds minimum, which is double the present one-third minimum, is, as I said, a good, solid majority, is a happy medium and is the most desirable and reasonable course for the present.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Menihek (Mr. Hiscock) as well as the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) for their remarks on this bill and for their serious treatment of this measure. I think it is a tribute to all of the members of this House to see that representatives of the three political parties who have members here take so seriously the administration and government of our schools and I want to say that I appreciate the remarks that have been made from all quarters in this debate.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest that we now vote on the amendment.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Shall I put the question of the amendment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those in favour of the amendment, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Aye.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those against the amendment

'nay'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Nay.

MR. SPEAKER:

The nays have it.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Schools Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 55).

MR. MARSHALL:

Order 7, Bill No. 48.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Remove Anomalies And Errors In The Statute Law (No. 2)." (Bill No. 48).

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move this bill on behalf of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) in whose name the bill has been put. Generally speaking an explanatory note really sets forth the nature of the bill. They are really technical amendments not involving matters of policy, but certainly they are amendments that have to be passed. There is an amendment here to the various acts that are listed there in the explanatory note. I do not know if hon. gentlemen really want me to debate the matter. If they do I will be happy to answer any questions that anyone may wish to raise with

respect to it.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY

He almost did it, Mr. Speaker, he almost sneaked it in before anybody noticed, when we were not looking. I did not realize that there were errors. The section I would like to refer to, Mr. Speaker, is the section dealing with the amendment to the House of Assembly Act to correct certain errors made in the description of the electoral districts. I would like to get the minister's comments as to what the effect would have been if the House had been dissolved prior to the correction of these boundaries.

There would have been four seats in which it would have been impossible to have - is it only four? I think one, two, three, I do not know about Conception Bay South and Harbour Main, were there

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MR. MARSHALL:

They were not really all that serious.

MR. BARRY:

Oh, there are a few people in those too. Well what we would have had, we would have had five seats, Mr. Speaker, in which it would have been impossible to ascertain who was entitled to vote where with respect to certain specific areas. Now, Mr. Speaker, that would have led to the result, I believe, that it would have been impossible to call an election. I wonder if that was the reason that we did not have one this Fall. Was that the reason that they did not jump on Mr. Mulroney's coattails? That is the question

that we have now. Or was it the polls that they have been getting?

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. BARRY:
Oh, it is only early yet for you. We have not gotten around yet to organizing St. George's yet totally. Another couple of weeks and it will be looking just as glum for you out there.

MR. WINDSOR:
What do you not come into Mount Pearl?

MR. BARRY:
Mount Pearl is moving as well. I am going in on Friday as a matter of fact to Mount Pearl to start doing a little damage in there.

The minister may have Mount Pearl sewed up because he is going far afield to find votes. A few constituents were over in Japan and he went over there to find them. He will go to all distances.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the most significant thing I believe in this Anomalies Act, and it is quite significant that we have some errors made in the description of the electoral boundaries of the districts of Conception Bay South, Harbour Main, Pleasantville, St. John's East and St. John's South.

Is there not another district affected? In the area there where St. John's South is in error, is there not another district that Blackmarsh Road and Albany Street impinges upon? Maybe the minister should check that.

DR. COLLINS:
That would be St. John's West if it was.

MR. BARRY:
It might have been Waterford-Kenmount.

MR. YOUNG:
St. John's Centre.

MR. BARRY:
Was it?

MR. BUTT:
Waterford-Kenmount boundaries have been moved now.

MR. BARRY:
St. John's West is not mentioned here.

DR. COLLINS:
I think the wording is just wrong. The boundary in the South was wrong but it is right to the West.

MR. BARRY:
I see. I see. Okay. It might have been that the description for the South took it over into the West so the West would have been affected without the amendment. There would have been -

MR. MARSHALL:
It is not going to affect the Liberal vote because there are no Liberals there.

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker, it would have been very interesting if the House had been dissolved because that would have meant that this act would automatically be in effect, there would have been improper boundaries, it would be impossible to have a proper voters' list, and in the case of a tie election or in fact in the case of an election within five or six seats it would be impossible to determine who had the government. So we had a very serious result because of a few lines drawn and a few descriptions

a little bit out of kilter. Do we have the minister's assurance now that these have been checked out?

MR. MARSHALL:

Very carefully.

MR. BARRY:

Because we do not have the surveying implements over here available to us right now. But we, Mr. Speaker, would support the various corrections of anomalies here and we look forward to having an early opportunity to utilize the descriptions and the new boundaries.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I just move second reading, Mr. Speaker. In moving second reading I would, with all the ifs and ands, if you wanted to take it that way, if the hon. member were not Leader of the Opposition maybe the Liberals would win more seats than they are going to win in the next election, instead of being decimated. There will be lucky to have one row left, Mr. Speaker. I will not name the ones that are going to be there.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Remove Anomalies And Errors In The Statute Law (No. 2)," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 48)

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, before moving the adjournment of the House, I might mention what I mentioned to the hon. member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk), the Opposition House Leader

today. Unfortunately the member for Menihok (Mr. Fenwick) is not here, and I do not know whether he is within the precincts of the House or not, but I wondered whether it might be possible to forego Private Member's Day tomorrow. I have given the hon. member for Fogo a list of the legislation that government wishes to have passed before we rise and wondered whether it might be possible to forego Private Member's Day. We are certainly prepared to forego it over here, because the motion scheduled to be discussed tomorrow was put down by an hon. member over here.

MR. BARRY:

What about Bill No. 35?

MR. MARSHALL:

Bill 35? Mr. Speaker, I want to be sure now which order it is. I do not want to mislead, that is the last thing I would ever want to do with the hon. gentleman. What one is that? What order are we looking at there?

MR. BARRY:

Order No. 11.

MR. MARSHALL:

Order No. 11. No, that is not one we intend to lead before the House rises. We do not intend to deal with that at this particular time.

MR. BARRY:

We will give sympathetic consideration to the minister's request.

MR. MARSHALL:

The hon. member for Menihok (Mr. Fenwick) is here now. Since this would require unanimous consent of the House, the hon. member perhaps wants to think on it if it has not mentioned to him by the Opposition House Leader. Tomorrow normally

is Private Member's Day but what we suggest the government side is prepared to waive Private Member's Day, since the motion to be discussed was put down by an hon. member of this side of the House, the hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach). In the interest of seeing what we could do to expedite the business of the House, I have given the Opposition House Leader a list of the bills that the government wishes to pursue and there is not really all that much. I could just perhaps go over them, although there is a danger because I have not got some ticked. The Opposition House Leader has them. They are monumental bills, every bill we bring before this House is monumental, but they are ones that I think will meet ready acceptance by hon. members. And if we could make a lot of progress tomorrow - who knows - maybe we could ask the Governor to come in tomorrow to give assent.

MR. BARRY:
What about Bill No. 23?

MR. MARSHALL:
What order is No. 23? Which one is that one?

MR. BARRY:
The Public Service Pensions Act.

MR. MARSHALL:
No, we are not going ahead with that. I have given the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Tulk) a list of them.

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BARRY:
Stop the clock.

MR. SPEAKER:
Is it agreed to stop the clock for a few minutes?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:
Agreed.

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:
I see no reason not to go along with that agreement. In the spirit of the season and co-operation I would ask if the government would be willing to invite me to the ceremonies in Corner Brook on Friday because I plan to be on the West Coast at that time and I would certainly appreciate dropping in.

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

MR. BAIRD:
The ceremony is only for local members.-

MR. BARRY:
Whenever taxpayers' money is being spent on parties, you are welcome.

MR. TULK:
One of the things that we do over on this side is consult with our caucus and I think we will let the Government House Leader know about ten or ten-thirty in the morning.

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

On motion, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, December 19, 1984 at 3:00 p.m.