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(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

Thursday

28 November 1985

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

Oral Questions

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier. I notice that we are missing another minister today, the ministers seem to be all vanishing.

MR. BAIRD:
Where is your leader?

MR. TULK:
He is away on business. Well, the front benches are not all empty over here. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we received some assurances that fishermen and their families would be relieved of the many anxieties and hardships that they have been living with for months. We raised the most tragic spectacle of a whole community by the name of Branch actually going on a hunger strike in this Province. Today I understand there may very well be, if it has not already happened, the same kind of action in the town of Bonavista. We thought, Mr. Speaker, that finally the sad story of the inshore fishermen had reached a practical conclusion, that this government was going to act. Now I am informed, as other members on this side of the House are informed, that there are many other districts and communities in this Province in the same predicament that citizens of

Branch found themselves in. I want to ask the minister, since we tried to get an answer on this yesterday, when is this government going to provide the relief they have so often promised to inshore fishermen and their families the plant workers? It is pure cruelty that they have so often delayed acting in this matter.

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

MR. MARSHALL:
Mr. Speaker, that is an extremely general question, general in nature. This government is working every day to improve the lot of the inshore fishermen as well as all Newfoundlander. The hon. gentleman is fully aware of what is being done, because the hon. Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power) indicated yesterday, with respect to the joint \$9 million programme that has been instituted by the Federal and Provincial government, that it is operating. He advised them yesterday about the situation with respect to Branch. The hon. gentleman opposite was trying to paint a scenario yesterday with respect to Branch and the hon. Minister was able to answer him immediately. With respect to his generalizations, I can say that this government takes steps every day to protect the interest of the inshore fishermen. Millions of dollars have been expended by this government, with respect to the inshore plants, to assure that they have a proper and adequate place in which to have their fish processed. We have spent millions of dollars on the fishermen's loans programme, and on and on.

MR. FLIGHT:

Answer the question.

MR. MARSHALL:

The hon. gentleman asked a general question and I am giving him a general answer.

MR. TULK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, let me ask the minister a very general question. The minister sits in a very comfortable chair in this House, at least part time, but does he realize, I ask him in all fairness on behalf of the fishermen and the plant workers in this Province, the hardships that they are suffering? Does he realize the hardships and the anguish those people are feeling, especially with Christmas just around the corner? Is this government going to be Scrooge this Christmas? Is he going to keep those people in the same anguish over Christmas that they have been in all the Fall? When are we going to see the final completion of all those fishermen's work programmes? Does he realize that they have nothing to provide for their families, that they are practically on the verge of starvation? Does he realize that?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Minister of Career Development indicated yesterday that the government is getting this programme instituted very quickly and will be

delivering the benefits to the fishermen concerned at the earliest possible opportunity, almost immediately. If the hon. gentleman wants to talk about concern for inshore fishermen, he should have had more concern over the issue of factory freezer trawlers. The hon. gentlemen there opposite disgraced themselves by voting against it, thereby precluding a unanimous resolution against factory freezer trawlers by this House. So if the hon. gentleman wants to try to talk on behalf of the inshore fishermen of the Province of Newfoundland, I do not think that the inshore fishermen, or any fishermen in this Province, would like the hon. gentlemen there opposite purporting to represent them, particularly when they took such a disgraceful stand on factory freezer trawlers.

MR. TULK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, let me tell the hon. gentleman about FFTs, this is a letter from his friend in Ottawa, Mr. Nielsen. You will note there is a little paragraph there which one of those days I will read to him to show him who made representation to Ottawa on the FFTs. Now let me ask him this question, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister now stand in his place and make a commitment - I do not want to drag the inshore fishermen and plant workers through this House again - that this government will approve those projects so that there will be some funds going into people's pockets before Christmas, at the earliest

possible opportunity? Or is this part of what I believe is the master plan of this government, to do away with the inshore fishery by starving people out of fishing boats?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

How silly is the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker. The hon. minister gave a full and complete answer to that question. When he gave us a specific instance with respect to Branch, the minister was able to get up on his feet and say within two or three days the programme would be delivered. So it will be with all the other programmes being put in place. They will be delivered at the earliest possible opportunity.

MR. TULK:

When?

MR. MARSHALL:

He rings very hollow, Mr. Speaker, and you can hear how sensitive he is. There is a party on the other side of this House, Mr. Speaker, that voted for the introduction of factory freezer trawlers in this Province, voted for the exhaustion of the Northern cod stock and the deprivation of that cod stock from the inshore fishermen on the Northeast Coast of this Province, a place, Mr. Speaker, by the way, which the member represents, the district of Fogo.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I say to the Deputy Premier this is unbelievable. We have hundreds of people out in the district who actually have no money, no food, and no income for the past two to three months. The situation is they have been driven to the point of starvation, driven to Social Services, which has continuously turned them away with no food. They cannot even afford to buy their children warm clothes with the cold weather coming on, yet this minister can go on there about factory freezer trawlers when it is not the issue at all.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon member is making a speech. Please ask a question.

MR. EFFORD:

Will the minister take into consideration people who are doing without food, doing without clothing, and show us that that government has some heart and provide for those people immediately, not next week or next month, but today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, this government makes a significantly greater contribution than trying to prey on the hardships of the inshore fishermen, as the hon. gentleman did earlier in this session when he took the stance he did with respect to certain fishermen around the Port de Grave area. Mr. Speaker, the government of this Province is very well aware of the unfortunate situation that

has occurred as a result of the failure of the fishery in this Province this year. As a result of this it entered into discussions with the hon. Flora MacDonald.

MR. EFFORD:

What have you done about the situation? You have done nothing.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

The hon. gentleman can get as excited as he wants, but the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the situation as a result of the failure of the fishery, we are doing everything we possibly can in order to mitigate and alleviate the situation, and we will continue to do so.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Energy (Mr. Marshall) responsible for Newfoundland Hydro. There is a feeling around and abroad that there is a lot of mismanagement, waste, and extravagance in Newfoundland Hydro, that there is no accountability and that Newfoundland Hydro can advance its waste and its extravagance by either coming to this government and getting loan guarantees or running to the Public Utilities Board and getting rate increases. Why is Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro not accountable to the Auditor General of Newfoundland?

Why does the Auditor General of Newfoundland not audit Newfoundland Hydro?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

There is no mismanagement at Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. It is one of the most efficiently operated Crown corporations in Canada. If the hon. gentleman wants to look at the proportionate expenditure that is made for management, it is extremely low. Most of the money that is required goes into oil and into capital projects for the generation of hydro power. What loan guarantees is the hon. gentleman talking about?

MR. FLIGHT:

\$300 million for Cat Arm, \$300,000 here, \$400,000 there.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

The hon. gentleman purports to Energy critic, so he should acquaint himself with the facts before he gets up and makes those wide, silly, stupid statements, and purports to speak on behalf of all people in the Province. It is not the function of the Auditor General because the government of this Province has not given the Auditor General the function of auditing Hydro. What has happened with respect to Hydro is an independent firm of accountants audit their books. They have to present their records, their financial statements and justify any rate increase to the Public Utilities Board. There is full and complete disclosure, there is full and complete debate. The practice

in recent years has been that the Federation of Municipalities, for instance, has been involved in this process. So it is a complete, open process and there is a capacity for all of the people of the Province to know exactly where every single cent is spent, and I think every single cent is spent wisely, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans, a supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT:
Peat Marwick Mitchell and Company simply verifies and prepares an annual financial audited statement for Newfoundland Hydro. Newfoundland Hydro is not audited or scrutinized for efficiency, for proper management, for effectiveness. Why are the actions and performance of Newfoundland Hydro not under scrutiny in this House of Assembly as a result of an audit by the Auditor General? Why cannot this House of Assembly scrutinize the performance of Newfoundland Hydro through the Auditor General? Why not?

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

MR. MARSHALL:
Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, it is not necessary for the reason I gave when I answered his initial question.

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:
The public of Newfoundland, pensioners, widows, the financially underprivileged, pay for Hydro's mismanagement - a \$15 million blunder on the Cat Arm project; an \$8.1 million forest settlement on the Upper Salmon. Now why does the minister not try and satisfy the public, the people who are paying these bills? Why does he not try to satisfy them? Why does he not try to assure them and try to stop the criticism of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro by making Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro accountable to the Auditor General, and thereby accountable to this House of Assembly? It is the people of Newfoundland who pay the bills. This House of Assembly should scrutinize Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro and we can only do it if Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro is accountable to the Auditor General. Why not?

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

MR. MARSHALL:
Mr. Speaker, if he can only scrutinize it because the Auditor General looks at the books, I cannot help that. The fact of the matter is the books of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, the affairs of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro are before this House, they are a part of the estimates. The vote to Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro is a part of the estimates. Any information that the hon. gentleman may wish, in order to be able to ask questions at the Estimates Committees, can be gained. It is a fully open corporation. It gives all of its information, I would suggest to the hon. gentleman, primarily

through the Public Utilities Board itself, and through that there is a complete public examination of the affairs of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. If he finds something unusual with respect to what has transpired at any time in those proceedings, by all means bring it to this House, which he is capable of doing, ask questions on it, and we will be happy to respond.

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:
We know that government have not permitted the Auditor General to audit the books of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro up to this point in time. Is the minister prepared to consider having the Auditor General audit the books of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro so that Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro can be scrutinized for efficiency to make sure we are getting our dollar's value from that corporation? Will the minister undertake to make Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro accountable to the Auditor General?

MR. MARSHALL:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL:
I have already given the answer. The hon. gentleman does not know what the Auditor General does. He talks about efficiency and what have.

MR. FLIGHT:

What about cost effectiveness?
Are we getting our dollar's value?

MR. MARSHALL:
The people who are charged with the responsibility for determining whether or not there has been value for money is not the Auditor General's Department, which audits books. Whether expenditures have been properly made or not is determined by hon. gentlemen there opposite in the Opposition; who have the prime responsibility to bring forth questions in this House with respect to the efficiency or otherwise of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. But the way in which, Mr. Speaker, hon. gentlemen opposite have conducted the Estimates Committees, and the way in which they have conducted question period in this House, show how abysmally unequipped they are to do so and to carry out their duties.

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Health. It concerns the recommendations of the Report of the Royal Commission on Hospital and Nursing Homes Costs which was submitted to the Government of Newfoundland on February 15, 1984, and subsequently adopted by them. In the report, Mr. Speaker, there is a priority list established for nursing homes in the Province, senior citizens or chronic care homes, on which Twillingate, I believe, is number three, after the Agnes Pratt Home and the home in Bonavista, and then

Twillingate. I wonder can the minister tell the House if that list still prevails? And if so, what time can we expect some action on these recommendations?

DR. TWOMEY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. TWOMEY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There have been no recent change made in that list. As regards to the future, I cannot give you any answers. You are aware, as I think all members of this House are, that these homes have been built with Canada Mortgage and Housing funding which brings our interest rate to 2 per cent. We have not got confirmation, definite confirmation from our federal colleagues on that matter. When we have definite confirmation I will be able to advise you and this House.

MR. W. CARTER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, some concern is being expressed by people in the Province, certainly in my district, when they hear reports, for example, that a senior citizens home was recently announced for the hon. minister's district. There is talk of the Bonavista area being served by such a facility, and that is why I guess there is some concern and doubt being expressed. Is the minister saying then, Mr. Speaker, that if the special financing that

was in existence under the Canada Mortgage Agreement is not reinstated, and I suppose there is a good chance it will not be, there will be no more senior citizens homes built in the Province?

DR. TWOMEY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. TWOMEY:

Well, that is a hypothetical question and I cannot answer it at this particular time. I can only postulate that if that happened then the Department of Health would have to explore all avenues from which to build beds for senior citizens and chronic care units.

MR. W. CARTER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the commitment was made to commence construction on some of these homes in 1985 - 1986 - I am sure, for example, that Twillingate was promised one - is there a continuity plan now? What happens? How long will the government wait before seeking other sources of financing? The people are waiting for these funds and they are very important.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. TWOMEY:

That again is a very difficult question. I would need the ability of a futurist to answer

that at this particular time. I cannot make a decision, and neither can the department or the government, until we are absolutely definite about whether we are getting funds from Canada Mortgage and Housing.

MR. W. CARTER:
How long will it take?

DR. TWOMEY:
I do not know, because that is the decision of the Federal government. When we have received a definite answer, and when we are absolutely sure that answer is correct, then we will be in a position to make a statement at least.

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker, my question is to the same minister. In the Spring when a delegation representing the Come By Chance area talked about having their closed hospital at Come By Chance turned into a chronic care unit, the minister was present at the meeting here in this building and he said that no support was being given to a group in the Clarendville - Random Island which was looking for a senior citizens home in that area. I would like to ask the minister if that is the same policy that the minister still maintains? It is under his department now, but then it was under Social Services. Has the policy changed on that? Has the minister changed his mind? Is he now giving support to the people in the Clarendville - Random Island area for a chronic care unit in that area?

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

DR. TWOMEY:
Mr. Speaker, I do not remember ever making that statement. The first official information I had of plans to build a chronic care institution in the Clarendville area, came last week. So, certainly I did not give priority, I did not insinuate priority and each and every one will be evaluated in the same way. As you know, we are waiting for a report on all chronic care services on the Island and when we have that report we will be able to make a decision.

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CALLAN:
No, Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Premier and the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), I want to ask this question of the Government House Leader. It ties in with questions that were asked earlier by the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight). Mr. Speaker, the hon. Premier, in the House of Assembly on March 30, 1979, in commenting upon the Auditor General's recommendation for new legislation for a separate Auditor General's Act, stated, and I quote, "The Auditor General's suggestions in this regard are worthy of this House's most serious consideration." Now that is what the Premier said in 1979.

Over seven years ago, Mr. Speaker, the previous Auditor General talked about the need for a new Auditor General's Act so that they could go in and audit Hydro and others. Let me ask the minister,

Mr. Speaker, what is the status of a new Auditor General's Act for this Province? We are the only province in Canada which does not have its own separate and distinct Auditor General's Act. Where is it? When can we and the Auditor General expect it?

MR. MARSHALL:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL:
The hon. gentleman is making many statements that I do not think have any foundation, but I will not debate them with him.

MR. CALLAN:
They are in the Auditor General's report.

MR. MARSHALL:
I know that there has been discussions with respect to legislation pertaining to the Auditor General. The hon. gentleman is now touching on a question which is a matter of debate in many circles, and it relates to the duties of legislative members, or parliamentary members, on the one hand, and the duties of the Auditor General on the other. The hon. gentleman is aware, I am sure, that there has been, for a number of years, a continuous debate with respect to the appropriate functions of the Auditor General.

The view taken by the Government of this Province at the present time is that the Auditor General's function should be as it is, which is mainly reporting on expenditures which are made. In other parts of Canada, some people

feel that Auditors General should be employed to enquire into efficiency of expenditures.

MR. CALLAN:
When can we expect the new Auditor General's Act?

MR. MARSHALL:
A lot of people who adhere to the parliamentary process believe that that latter function is one which can properly be discharged in the legislative or parliamentary function. Having answered that, I cannot specifically tell the hon. gentleman where the Act is now, but I know that it has been discussed between the Auditor General and the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). I can reiterate what the Premier said. What the Auditor General says on these matters is taken and weighed very carefully and very seriously by us, and we would want to accommodate him, but there are matters of policy and there are matters of the proper functioning of the parliamentary system within the ambit of the Auditor General himself.

MR. CALLAN:
A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker, in answering my question, the minister said that some of the things I quoted were not true. I was quoting directly from the last Auditor General's Report, and it is factual.

Now, let me tell the minister this: On May 4-

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

There is no need to read in a supplementary. Would the hon. member ask his question?

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Finance, let me ask the Government House Leader in view of the fact that the Auditor General has had a draft bill before that government for well over a year, when can we expect a new Act for the Auditor General of this Province?

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I did not say that everything the hon. gentleman says is untrue. The hon. gentleman says many things. Some things are true, some things are half-truths, some things are distorted and some things are untrue. I will not bother to isolate which are which. But, Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that this matter is still under discussion and, at such time as the government is ready and can bring in an Auditor General's Act which it feels is one which will strengthen the office of the Auditor General and serve better than the present rules, that particular time is when we will lead that Act into the House of Assembly.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of

Justice (Ms. Verge). As we are all aware the people of Rigolet over the last number of months have gone through some very trying circumstances and there has been an RCMP officer temporarily stationed there. Since this RCMP officer is due to leave this Saturday, my question for the Minister of Justice is, what arrangements have been made to continue to provide that community with police services?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Basically, Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice and get detailed information to answer the precise question as quickly as possible which should be within the next twenty-four hours. I have discussed the need for policing in Rigolet with the Chief Superintendent of the RCMP in this Province. That was a month or so ago, shortly after an officer had been stationed in Rigolet on a temporary basis. At that time it was the intention of the Chief Superintendent to evaluate the situation in Rigolet after the officer had spent some time in Rigolet, and after that evaluation decide what arrangements should be put in place for protection and policing of the people in Rigolet thereafter.

MR. FENWICK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is that I have been in contact with the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor of

Rigolet today and they informed me that the proposal they have been offered is to have an RCMP officer for three days in and seven days out. They have indicated that they are quite frightened, especially because the next month, the month of December, includes a number of holidays and occasions when problems may arise. They would like assurances that they can get an RCMP officer -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Would the hon. the member please ask his supplementary?

MR. FENWICK:

My question to the Minister of Justice is: Will she look into putting an RCMP officer in there at least until the end of the year and then go on the shift system in January?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS. VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, yes, I will do that. I will certainly take into account and discuss with the Chief Superintendent of the RCMP the wishes and advice of the mayor and other citizens of Rigolet.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For some time now, Mr. Speaker, I have been trying to get some information from the Department of Municipal Affairs, specifically the minister. I have written letters, I have phoned, I have raised it in debate in the House during supply

debates and so on, asking the minister for a list of municipalities in the Province that received grants under the sixty/fifty roads programme under this budget, and the minister has not provided me with this information. My question is to the Deputy Premier. Since this is public information, will the Deputy Premier please order the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Doyle) to supply that public information?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I apologize to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker. I heard him refer to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs and thought he was addressing his question to him. I will pass that to the hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I know the hon. gentleman thinks I am responsible for everything, but the hon. minister discharges his duties very well. I think he can answer that question.

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

I know he was not listening, but what the member for Gander asked was for him to take some action to get some information out of that minister since he is the Deputy Premier and in command over there.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MARSHALL:

The hon. gentleman came from the schoolhouse and he should go back there now, he wants a little reporting thing. The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs now has to do things or else he has to answer to me, I mean, that is ridiculous. He asks a question, Mr. Speaker, and the minister responsible can answer it.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the hon. gentleman from Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) a couple of weeks ago, the department was then in the process of preparing that list and it is still in the process of being prepared. Mr. Speaker, the reason why we had a delay on having that list put out was additional information had to be put together for it, the water services vote and the fire equipment vote had to be added in there as well. So some research had to be done on that particular part of it and when the list is prepared and when it is ready hon. gentlemen opposite will be given it. We have nothing to hide, Mr. Speaker, in the Department of Municipal Affairs.

MR. BAKER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, to make it clear to the minister what I am asking for, is the list of communities that received 60/40 roads money. I did

not ask about the other stuff, I am talking about 60/40 roads money. I want that list, the minister says it is in the process of being prepared, but is it not true that certain contractors were given that list by your department sometime in June or early July?

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, what the hon. gentleman asked for was only one part of the list. What I am preparing for him is the full list of water and sewer, 60/40 road programmes, what was extended in the Water Services Division, and the fire equipment vote, and all that is in the process of being put together and, as soon as it is put together, the hon. gentleman will have it. It is as simple as that.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has now elapsed.

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like at this stage to welcome to the galleries Mayor John Barrett, Harry Strong, Harold Driscoll, and Alex Pike of the Town of Old Perlican.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Notices of Motion

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act To Remove Anomalies And Errors In The Statute Law (No. 2)."

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Labrador Linerboard Limited Agreement Act, 1979, In Order To Ratify, Confirm And Adopt An Amending Agreement Entered Into Between Her Majesty, The Queen, In Right Of The Province Represented By The Hon. The Minister Of Forest Resources And Lands And Abitibi-Price Incorporated."

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the answer to a question asked by the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) with respect to the hiring of a public relations specialists in the Department of Municipal Affairs.

Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Bill No. 53, "An Act To Amend The Memorial University (Pensions) Act."

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

MR. J. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I adjourned the debate last time and I only had a couple of points that I wanted to make.

I certainly concur with the provisions of the Act, but I do think that it might be wise to discuss it in the larger issue of pensions generally. I would like to ride a particular hobbyhorse of mine which is the possibility of implementing negative income tax. I think this is a good time to mention this and for the member's interest I will just outline a few numbers that are quite revealing.

If you consider that there are roughly 25 million people in Canada, then that means that for every \$1 billion that Ottawa spends in public money for social purposes, that is \$40.00 per capita. I do not think it is hard, if you look at the federal budget, to come up with approximately \$50 billion that is spent for such programmes and that amounts to \$2,000 per capita for every man, woman and child in Canada. If you assume further, and I think this is a very safe assumption, that no more than half of those in Canada are in need of extra social capital, then you can argue that \$4,000 per capita could be made available to those who really need social assistance, that is assistance of a social nature. This would be \$20,000 for

a family of five.

Therefore, it seems to me that by spending no more money than we are spending now, we could introduce a negative income tax, that is to say, if it is logical and right and proper to tax people because they made a lot of money, it is equally logical and sensible, in fact more so, to give them assistance when they fail to earn this money.

It may seem strange coming from someone who is considered to be a little right of center to suggest that we are our brother's keeper, but I have always believed that. It is just how we keep our brother and the way we go about it that I may differ with hon. gentlemen. I would like to add that a great many people who are in a position of power to be able to implement such a change agree with me.

AN HON. MEMBER:

A guaranteed income.

MR. J. CARTER:

Guaranteed income, yes, or negative income tax. The only problem they have is that they feel it would be enormously dislocating. Well, I neither agree nor disagree with that statement. I just have to plead ignorance. In any case, I think it would be a giant step forward and I would just like to call hon. members to the consideration of these figures. It is worth saying publicly and I will probably say it again. This seemed to me like a good slot to mention it. I am sure there will be other opportunities for me to mention it and for other members to mention it. I think it is worth saying. I will take my seat now and leave this matter for the consideration of others.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you.

Unfortunately, my friend, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) is not here because it is an opportunity to talk about the Memorial University Pension Act here and then, I think, the whole larger question of pensions in general, as well as, perhaps, to refer to some of the comments we made on a previous piece of legislation, which I think is germane to this particular piece of legislation.

The substance of the bill is quite an interesting one. What it suggests is that there are individuals who worked in the Public Service and who are now working for Memorial University and because of an anomaly in the law their pensions are not being adjusted in accordance with other adjustments being made to Public Service Pensions and Memorial University Pensions. It is appropriate that we should correct this anomaly.

It is curious that the government is willing to take responsibility for these individuals, going from the Public Service to Memorial University, and not willing to take responsibility for other individuals who work for the government, doing the business of the government. I refer, of course, to the people who, in Memorial University, would wash the floors and clean the blackboards and do the other maintenance duties that are involved there, and of the people

who are the security guards there and so on. It is my understanding, from talking to the Minister of Finance, that these particular individuals are not covered by this particular piece of legislation. Of course, that shows, I think, a very duplicitous standard here.

What you have is a situation where professors, people who work in the administration of the University and others are covered by a pension plan and are covered adequately by it. It is indexed to inflation. In contrast, you have got the cleaners, the most poorly paid, I would suggest, employees of Memorial University, who receive no pension whatsoever and will have no chance to accumulate the kind of benefits to have a pension plan, which combined with the Canada Pension Plan, would give them an adequate retirement income. Again it is an example of what I call a hideous using of people so that no responsibility is taken by the employer.

What we have is a situation here where the provincial government, which is the largest employer in the Province, is saying to its employees - and obviously the employees who clean the government buildings and the university buildings and so on are, in every sense of the word, employees of the government, doing the people's business - these individuals have no right to the same benefits that the university professors will have, the clerks and the typists who are working in the offices, the people who work in the labs and so on.

I cannot understand how the Minister of Finance or any of the members opposite cannot see that a

person who cleans the floor is every bit as important to the operation as are the people who teach in that classroom the next day. The obligations, surely, to those lowest paid employees should be just as strong as the obligations to the professors, to the clerks and to the typists.

Of course, there is an argument for it. We have heard the argument from the Minister of Finance. His argument, of course, is it is cheaper to wash their hands and I think the washing of the hands is a very good image for this particular job. What it suggests is the provincial government is not willing to live up to its responsibility as a conscientious employer and take care of individuals who have given their life or large periods of their life to the service of the public of this Province. I think that is an important thing to realize.

The Minister of Finance, when he was making his comments before on a debate similar to this with a previous bill, was saying that he felt it was not the responsibility of the government or the employer but that we allow whatever safety net is out there to take care of it.

Let us look at that safety net. What does it consist of? The Canada Pension Plan and, in most cases, an old age pension and an old age pension supplement. If these individuals are lucky enough to get a continuous record of employment over a long period of time to have made contributions to the Canada Pension Plan, maybe they might even get something out of that but, as I think most people in this House know, the vast majority of the people living

at or below the poverty line in this Province are old age pensioners. These are individuals, the majority of which have worked many years of their lives and have just been unfortunate enough not to be in the right kind of job for it. When the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) gets up and says, 'We are not interested in providing pensions for all people in the Province,' my question to him is why not? Why not be interested in providing a decent retirement income for all of the people of this Province?

I am suggesting to this House that the employment patterns in our Province are so substantially different from those in Ontario or British Columbia or Quebec or any other province, that we have a special need here to look after people who have the kinds of employment patterns we have.

Look at them. The inshore fisherman is a good example. In a lot of cases he may only work ten or eleven or twelve weeks out of a year. It is very difficult under those circumstances to accumulate any significant amount of Canada Pension Plan benefits for their retirement age. Generally speaking, he will have to live on old age pension and the supplement and, of course, we all know that the old age pension and the supplement is so far below the poverty line as to be almost nowhere near it.

What I am suggesting to this House is, we have an obligation to look after the employees of government, the people who clean this carpet, the people who clean the classrooms at Memorial University, and I think we should live up to that obligation. I say to you

that a policy of a decent government would be that they would not contract out services; or if they felt it was more efficient that they contracted out services, they would guarantee certain minimums, one of which would be a pension plan for employees to retire on; another would be a wage rate that is not the minimum wage but is in comparison to work done in the Public Service at that range.

It is a massive shame that the government over there can continue to contract out job after job after job or services after services and allow the people who perform those services to work, almost universally, at the minimum wage. I admit the cleaners and the maintenance people and the security guards at Memorial University do not. There is one reason they do not. They are a unionized group and they have been strong enough as a unionized group to make sure that the contract does not get tossed as a hot potato from one contractor to another. But, at the same time, they still are denied many of the benefits that are enjoyed by public employees who work in this building and in the extension building and all the rest of the buildings across this Province. That is plainly not fair.

But I want to leave that for a second, because I think we have a requirement here. We have an obligation as the legislators and the people who set the tone for this Province to look at the special needs of all the inshore fishermen, the plant workers and other people who have special employment patterns because of the nature of the work that is involved in this Province.

We should consider whether or not we should look at a publicly-funded - along with contributions from individuals - pension plan that would cover all these special groups, the inshore fishermen; the plant workers in very seasonal plants; and constructions workers, a very good example. Now, admittedly, some of the construction workers do have particular kinds of jobs and usually, if there is a pension supplied to them, it is supplied through the union. That is one of the few ways that these kinds of employees, who work on temporary jobs here, there and everywhere, have been able to accommodate those benefits.

Unfortunately, because of the very, very loose contracting out laws that we have in this Province, it is virtually impossible for the cleaners who work in this building or in Memorial University facilities to get into a union and to be able to protect their union security. I will explain why.

In our laws we have very weak successor rights articles. If the cleaners in this building were to join a union, if they were to negotiate a contract with Treasury Board, just like everybody else does, and if they were to get a contract which increased their salaries - not with Treasury Board, I apologize, with the contractor who has the contract - if they were to do that, they may raise their salary from the lordly sum of \$4 maybe to \$5 or \$6 an hour, then in a couple of years time our Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young) would say, "It is now time to contract out that work again." They would ask for new bids on it. Someone would come in and bid based on a

minimum wage salary, and because it is lower, they would get the job, and the individuals at \$6 an hour would now lose their jobs.

Normally, where there is good labour laws, the employer who came on, the new employer, would be obligated by a successor rights clause, to keep these employees on at the rate that has been negotiated and to keep the collective agreement in place. Unfortunately, our laws in this Province are so weak that that is not required.

I mention this for the purposes of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Blanchard) who, I am sure, is very much attuned to this whole problem. Actually, after I finish speaking I would be very much interested in hearing the Minister of Labour's comments on this particular problem, because it is an important problem. It is the kind of problem that knaws away at the individuals who do this work and provides them with no job security and provides them with no long term benefits.

I would like to see us change the law so that if the new contractors come in, they would be obligated to continue on with that collective agreement. Even if they changed the pails and the mops and the buffers and whatever capital equipment is used in it, because I think, if I know it correctly, our labour legislation says that if you take over the material and the operation of the employer, you would have to continue with the contract. Of course, if you come in with your own mops, and buffers and pails, that is new equipment and you do not have any obligation. Of course, for cleaners that is very obviously very easy to do.

So there is one problem. How do we provide proper social security for the people who work for this Province but do it through contractors? I personally would like to see us do away with the contracting out system. I think it is a very poor way of doing it. If we cannot get rid of it entirely, then I think the next best thing would be to provide a minimum level of benefits for them and to provide pensions for them as well.

To the larger question, and that is what do we do about pensions for people in our industries who are in very, very temporary kinds of jobs, the inshore fishermen, the plant workers and so on. My argument to you is this: what we should establish is a public pension plan for the Province of Newfoundland. At the beginning, I would suggest it would be voluntary, but voluntary on the part of the employees. Employees in a particular fish plant, for example, could say, "Yes, we would like to be part of this pension plan. We will make deductions from our salary to go into it." And the employer, whoever they are employed by, would be obligated to make matching contributions, just as is the case with Canada Pension Plan, as is the case with the Public Service Pension Plan, and as is the case with the MHA Pension Plan. It is the case with all pension plans.

This plan would be such that the individuals in it would be mobile. Anywhere within the Province they could carry the pension plan with them. If they switched from one trawler company to another trawler company, they could move it over there; if they switched from one fish plant to another they could also move it as

well.

I recommend it highly to the government over there that this is only an appropriate response to the kinds of employment problems we have in our Province. Otherwise, we will continue to exist with a massive poverty problem for our old age pensioners. In my experience, virtually all, and especially in our rural areas, because there is a bias towards our rural areas, in most of our rural areas you could almost predict that everybody out there will be living on a pension, a Canada Pension Plan if they are really lucky, if they are not, and that is the majority, they will be on an old age pension and the old age pension supplement. That is basically what they will have to live on. As everybody in this Province knows, that is not enough.

So those are the two major comments I would like to make on this bill. The substance of it and the thrust of it I have every confidence that this is what should be done, but it seems to me that our government is somewhat hypocritical if it is willing to do that for government employees who have gone from here into Memorial and are now working there, and not do it for all the employees in the university, and not do it for all the employees of our civil service.

Having made those comments, I will ask the Minister of Labour (Mr. Blanchard) if he would get up and make some comments on that and I will sit down.

MR. MARSHALL:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):
The hon. the President of the

Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, if I could, I speak on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), unless there are any other members who want to ask any questions or make any comments. I would like to close the debate and pass to the minister.

MR. TULK:

We do not mind. We are not getting any answers anyway, so you may as well close the debate.

MR. MARSHALL:

All right, that is fine.

MR. FENWICK:

What about the Minister of Labour?

MR. MARSHALL:

Does the Minister of Labour wish to say a few words on that?

MR. BLANCHARD:

Yes.

MR. MARSHALL:

Okay, by all means.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Labour.

MR. BLANCHARD:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to address one particular aspect only of the comments which the hon. the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) has made and that is in respect to the question of successor rights contained in Section 89 of the Labour Relations Act.

There is no doubt at all, Mr. Speaker, that there has been fairly widespread problems over the question of contracted services for cleaning, etcetera, in the College of Trades and Technology and various other,

either government institutions, government agencies or whatever. We had thought at one time it was a relevantly simple procedure to correct that within the meaning of successor rights as contained in Section 89 of the Labour Relations Act but, after receiving a legal opinion on it, in connection with those services that are contracted, the law of contract, apparently, applies and, in reality, the particular section of the Labour Relations Act was not deemed to apply.

Mr. Speaker, I will finish by saying that we have not forsaken the issue or anything like that. We are aware of the problem. We are aware of the plight of those people who have to depend on their livelihood from that type of employment and the trauma that they go through in knowing that a new contract can mean the end of their employment. There is a great deal of sympathy. We have not abandoned the question all together. We plan to examine it further and find out whether something can be done or not.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Just a quick word with respect to other things that the hon. member for Menihek raised because he was the only one who really raised anything of significance or substance in this particular debate with respect to this particular Bill.

The matter that he refers to with

respect to pensions, is a matter that I think is a concern that is very well taken and it is not only in the fishing industry and in the Memorial University, it is everywhere within this Province because we have been subjected from time to time to situations where people have worked for years in firms and through no faults of the firms, because they go -

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

We recognize too, that the point that the member for Menihek raised was a very good point, but I would suggest to the hon. gentlemen that there were at least two or three people who spoke on this side and they did make some very good points. If the minister is going to answer all the questions when he is closing the debate, he should consider these other speakers. We know that on Monday and Tuesday and yesterday, the minister was quite upset. We know that he threw all kinds of temper tantrums in the last couple of days but he does not have to take his spite out on the Opposition and he does not have to throw his venom across here. He should get up and act like a statesman, like the Deputy Premier of this Province, put his past couple of hard days behind him and try to perform as we would expect out of a Government House Leader and a lawyer of such stature as the member opposite. He should stand up and do that, Mr. Speaker. It is terrible for him to say that there were no questions put out.

There were three or four people on this side. We recognize that the member for Menihek did put some out, but it is terrible for him to act like that. He should behave better.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order. The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I will just try to be nice, Mr. Speaker, that is all. The hon. gentleman has raised a question which is of a great deal of concern because there are a lot of people in this Province, and through no faults of the businesses particularly, I can think of people working for years in the downtown stores on Water Street being retired from time to time with a pittance, if anything, all completely and absolutely based upon the good offices of the employer, and if the employer gets old and goes bankrupt they are then left with nothing. That is not an acceptable situation, and it is one that government has been trying to grapple with.

The same thing applies with respect to Memorial. I know the hon. gentleman is going to say, Well, now, that is the government and government can provide it. It is a hard thing to say, but it is a matter, to a large degree, with respect to expenses and with respect to cost, and the problems which we are operating under.

I know that from time to time government has done its best to alleviate problems when they have occurred. I can think of, for instance, the case of a lot of ladies in St. John's who worked for varying periods of time in janitorial work for various

government businesses who found themselves in a position where, because of changes, these ladies no longer had a job, and government operated then. We have to operate on these things on a case-by-case basis.

Another instance that occurred, and occurred recently, was that a lady who worked in the government service for twenty-five or thirty years and who found out that for half the period of that time she was non-pensionable. That was a ridiculous anomaly because of the fact that this lady worked along with other employees who were pensionable and she was not given any idea that she was on a non-pensionable basis. When that occurred and became apparent, government took steps to remedy it. So we are not really without a conscience, we do the best we can.

On the general overall question of pensions, I will agree generally with what the hon. gentleman says; there is a need for some kind of pension legislation which is more effective than the legislation we have now.

Last year or the year before, I think we brought in a Pensions Act which is, as far as I am concerned, only just the very bottom base, and as time goes on I would hope to see this government be able to be in a position to enact a much stronger type of Pensions Act to make pensions as universal as possible in the Province, and to make them portable from one job to another, where you can.

But we have to, particularly when we have a fragile economy, unfortunately, walk very carefully. We would like to be

able to cure all the ills and all the injustices that occur, but, I am afraid, we just do not have the wherewithal to do it. But I will say I can sympathize with a lot of what the hon. member said because I have exactly the same views myself. But it is going to take a period of time.

I can assure the hon. member that this government is dedicated to seeing what it can do within the circumstances to alleviate it. It is a matter of priority and it has a priority with us, and as soon as we can get the wherewithal, I would hope, being the type of compassionate government we are, that we can address these problems in some way.

I move second reading, Mr. Speaker.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Memorial University (Pensions) Act", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 53).

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Department Of Finance Act." (Bill No. 56).

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I lead this bill into the House on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins).

MR. TULK:

Where is the minister?

MR. MARSHALL:

He is at the First Ministers' Conference, in Halifax.

MR. FUREY:

What is he getting done up there?

MR. TULK:

They would not take you.

MR. MARSHALL:

Obviously, you can expend your time much more fruitfully up in Halifax, whether the First Ministers' Conference is on or not, than you can in the House, where hon. gentlemen there opposite speak about Supplementary Supply for twenty-one days.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this amendment will permit the Minister of Finance to enter into agreements without the immediate approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council but subject to such terms, conditions and monetary limits as the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may from time to time establish.

MR. TULK:

You got some scalding on On Camera last night.

MR. MARSHALL:

It was a good programme. It was a good one, last night.

MR. TULK:

Yes, you got some scalding last night.

MR. MARSHALL:

By way of explanation, Mr. Speaker, in 1984 an act was passed called the Departmental Acts -

MR. TULK:

I hear you threw a temper tantrum last night.

MR. MARSHALL:

Now, Mr. Speaker, can I respond?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

He is going to drive me into a temper tantrum, if he does not

keep quiet.

In 1984 an Act was passed called the Departmental Acts Amendment Act. This Act basically amended certain individual Departmental Acts to provide the minister with authority to enter into contracts at various government departments without the prior approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. All departmental acts prior to that time had a requirement for prior approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council before the minister could enter into contracts.

Unfortunately, somehow or other the Department of Finance was excluded from that list and our Act is now being amended to provide the same provisions as are in the Departmental Acts Amendment Act. This is necessary to streamline the signing of agreements and the payment of bills, etc. The authority, of course, is subject to limits previously established by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

I think I have given an explanation of the bill, Mr. Speaker, and I would be happy to answer any questions if there are any.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

If the purpose of this bill is to streamline government operations in this Province, then I suppose we could support it. But I am not sure that we have the full details of this particular bill. On the surface it appears to be giving

the minister a lot of power. On the surface it appears to be giving the minister too much power, the right to spend monies, the right to sign contracts without the approval of the Cabinet and without the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

As I understand it, there will be certain limits. For example, I suppose the minister could be given the right by Cabinet to approve expenditures for \$20 million and within that limit, he can do what he likes. If that is the way it is, Mr. Speaker, then I would be very objectionable to it. It would appear, as I have said, on the surface to be giving the minister too, too much power. We have had in the past an abuse of power by this present government, a tremendous abuse of power. We have rules and regulations not being followed now by various departments with respect to expenditures, showing a complete disregard for this Legislature and a complete disrespect for this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me the direction in which we must be moving is to ensure that more of the spending power of this government is vested within this Legislature. Certainly the way to go is not to have ministers going out on a spending spree, not to have ministers abusing Parliamentary power and approving expenditures without the approval of Cabinet and without the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Now, if we are talking about a system whereby it is payment to people, payment to contractors which the government have attempted to streamline over the

past few years, that is a different matter. But certainly not an blank cheque to the Minister of Finance, not this particular Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, but any Minister of Finance. If it is a means to streamline payment to people incurring business with the Department of Finance, contractors and this kind of thing, who have entered into a previous contract and awaiting payment of money, certainly we will have to support that. I suppose, one of the most difficult things that contractors and people doing business with government find today is getting their money on time. It has always been a real problem. In some cases I would expect that the non-payment of monies by various government departments to various small business people and middle business people, I would venture to say that the tardiness by various government departments has caused some businesses to go into bankruptcy, waiting for payment.

Now, if this is the kind of thing we are talking about, to give the minister authority to pay these bills promptly, fine. But if it is a matter of giving the minister an open cheque book to go out and spend \$25 million, \$30 million, whatever the limit is established by the Cabinet, then, certainly, we could not support this kind of move. That would represent a complete disregard for the principles of Parliamentary procedure, as we understand them. As I said, Mr. Speaker, we certainly had enough of this by this particular administration who have shown a complete disregard for this Legislature, spending money without the approval of this Legislature. I think it is only in recent days that the Public Accounts Committee studied at

least three examples of where various departments disregarded this Legislature, disregarded approvals for spending by the Parliament of this Province by this Province's Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I think the three examples, as I recall them, involve one which was related to municipal affairs, where a fairly large expenditure, exceeding \$200,000, was granted to a certain municipality, contrary to The Financial Administration Act of this Province. So, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me what we need in this Legislature are more controls, not less controls. We need more controls, compatible with the way that a parliament should operate and certainly it is the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, the Cabinet, must approve expenditures. It cannot be left to individual ministers to go off and spend large sums of money without the prior approval of the Cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, heaven knows that they have enough flexibility. I have been talking about the abuses of the existing legislation. I have talked about the irregularity within the Department of Municipal Affairs where somewhere in excess of \$200,000 was granted to a municipality in this Province without the appropriate ratification of this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, the other point to demonstrate the need for tighter legislation, not looser legislation, the need for more stringent legislation, as opposed to more flexibility, particularly with respect to individual ministers, was a matter related to the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth where they went off spending money with

respect to the Canada Games Commission, I think, that is what we call them. I want to be quite clear that no derogatory remarks intended towards the Commission. They have an act, which must be followed. But it was the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth that did not follow the legislation laid down by this government. The Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth flaunted and disregarded their own rules with respect to expenditures of money to the Canada Games Commission - and large sums of money - and also with respect to hiring, and entering into contracts, all of this was done against the rules laid down by this Legislature.

MR. DECKER:
Shame.

MR. LUSH:

So, Mr. Speaker, I am pointing out some very flagrant abuses, incidents where ministers opposite abused their own legislation and showed complete disrespect for this Legislature. Of course, the other one, it is an old one now I am sure, but it was in the Department of Transportation where the government flaunted their own Public Tendering Act, went and acquired and purchased and equipped and whatever, rigged various ferries in various parts of the British Commonwealth without any public tendering and costing millions of dollars.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we need, Your Honour, is not giving ministers more freedom with respect to the expenditures of monies that are voted by this Legislature, what we need is a tightening up of controls.

MR. TULK:

Especially that person.

MR. LUSH:
Exactly.

By the way we have seen that particular minister operate what we need, Sir, is not to give that minister more flexibility; not to give him more freedom, unless it is related to payment of bills to small businesses and this kind of thing, but I am not sure that is the intent of the bill.

Maybe when the hon. the House Leader (Mr. Marshall) rises in his place to finish the debate on this particular reading he can be a little more emphatic and elucidate a little more as to precisely what power this is going to give the minister. It look to me to be granting the minister too much power. I have already demonstrated where we have had abuse of power. We have abused the legislation that is already in existence. It seems to me that they have abused the legislation in other departments to such an extent that probably this legislation is unnecessary.

Just a few closing remarks, Mr. Speaker, simply to say that this bill, as I understand it, certainly gives to much power to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). If that is the case, if this is what it is doing, we certainly cannot support granting the Minister of Finance a carte blanche to go and spend monies without the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council or without the approval of Cabinet. It is unthinkable, it is against every parliamentary tradition with respect to expenditures of money.

Maybe the hon. Houe Leader, when he rises, can be a little more

specific and indicate precisely what this is intended to do. He needs to give us more specifics, more details, and tell us specifically what power this will give the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt about it, it is going to be passed because there is nothing we can do about it. The numbers are not on this side to stop the government from passing this bill, regardless of how offensive it is, regardless of how ineffective it is, regardless of what kind of hardship, what kind of abuse this is going to impose on this legislature. We can do nothing about it. The minister, when he stands in his place, should tell us precisely what this bill would mean. What are its purposes precisely and what powers will it give the minister that he does not now already have? What will it do to further erode the power of this legislature? Goodness knows we have very little power. What will it do to erode the power of this legislature where we determine what monies are going to be spend? Now the government wants us to give the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) a free hand to go and spend out the money without reference to his colleagues, without reference to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me to be quite outside the established practice and tradition of parliament as we know it within the British world.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I have only a very few comments and a lot of them are along the same lines as the member for Bonavista-North (Mr. Lush).

I would ask the House Leader (Mr. Marshall), when he gets up to finish the debate, would he be a bit more explicit about what kind of agreements we are talking about here? It is not clear from reading this whether these are major borrowings that will be floated on the yen market or are we talking about contractual agreements for particular services? It is just a little bit too vague and if he could give us some definition of how it is.

I am not appaled by the idea of putting prior limits on it. I am very used to seeing that. It is done in collective bargaining all the time, when the Cabinet or Treasury Board would say, 'this is the limit you can go and when you get to that point, you are going to have to come back for more authorization.' That is a very familiar procedure and I have no objection to it, but if the House Leader could just be a little more explicit about what kind of agreements, I would be satisfied.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

If the hon. minister speaks now he closes the debate.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

This bill in its implications, Mr. Speaker, is more important than a

budget debate. Look at what this hon. crowd want to do here. There will be no need for a House of Assembly if this bill goes through. My friend for Bonavista North (Mr. Lush) says it is going to go through, and, of course what he means is that the Fourth Reich is in full flight and the Fourth Reich has all power and the Fourth Reich will put it through because it has more members.

MR. J. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! A point of order, the hon. member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER:

On a point of order, I wonder if the hon. member referring to this side of the House when he says the Fourth Reich is in order. Any references to Nazis and Naziism and the unfortunate period that Germany went through in the Second World War is not - as far as I am concerned - is a term of abuse. I have used it myself on occasion, but I have been quite conscious that it has been a term of abuse and I do not think it should be accepted. I think, Mr. Speaker, it could rightly be considered unparliamentary.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order, the hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

I quite agree and I find it regrettable that the gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) found it necessary to talk about Germany and Nazis and that

kind of thing. He was the first person in this debate to do so and not I, and I find it entirely regrettable. Secondly, I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that I could appeal to you now, you notice the pattern, I have been speaking all of twenty seconds and the self-appointed interruptor from St. John's North is on his feet and it will happen throughout, but I intend to say what I have to say on this bill. It is a bill I feel very strongly about. If this is going to be his game, then I guess that is his right, or his abusive right as the case may be. I would appeal to the Chair to see to it that he only rises on legitimate points of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I could recall for you some speeches that the gentleman from St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) made when he was in Opposition, or soon after he came into government. The general tenor of what he had to say, whether he was talking about conflict of interest, whether he was talking about election spending, whether he was talking about public tendering or whether he was talking about the question of accountability to the House, on all those subjects, he waxed eloquent, Mr. Speaker, on the need for the House to always be in the driver's seat on those matters, particularly in terms of financial accountability and in terms of controlling the purse strings of the Province, the public treasury. He waxed eloquent, Mr. Speaker, and I nodded approval

because I believed every word he said on those particular issues.

Under our system, which flows from Westminster, the ultimate function of a parliament such as this one or such as the one at Ottawa or at Queen's Park in Toronto or in New Zealand or Australia or anywhere else, the most important function of a parliament, including this one, is to maintain effective control over the purse strings. We recognize that from time to time a particular party has a majority in this House. It so happens right now it is the Tory Party.

MR. BUTT:

The Progressive Conservative Party.

MR. SIMMONS:

Well, the Progressive Conservative Party, which includes the Tory Party. I say to my friend from Conception Bay South (Mr. Butt), he may fool himself, he may delude himself, the real people in charge over there are not the Progressive Conservatives, they are the Tories, the few Tories. The tail wags the dog over there. He should realize that by now. He is part of the dog, not the tail. So I say Tory legitimately, Mr. Speaker.

The Tory Party has the effective majority in this House right now, but I was not wanting to make political points. I want to make an academic point that from time to time a Tory Party or a Progressive Conservative Party, or a Liberal Party, has the majority in the House and it is not completely by accident that very often the will of that majority prevails. But it is always done within the umbrella of the parliamentary system. We have always got to keep it that way.

We have always got to ensure that the majority in this House have its say.

Mr. Speaker, let us apply what I am saying to this particular bill. When the gentleman from St. John's East was attacking the former Premier, Mr. Smallwood and his regime, his administration, one of the points of attack was this issue of lack of control by the House of Assembly. He waxed eloquent again and again on how little control, from his vantage point, existed.

MR. J. CARTER:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! A point of order, the hon. the member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER:

I am subject to correction, but the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) is not speaking to the point of the bill, not at all. I will gladly take my seat if I am proven wrong, but this bill, as I understand it, is to limit the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance need not, under certain conditions, get the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. It has nothing to do with the House of Assembly. I wish he would stick to the point of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

To that point of order, there is no point of order. This is a bill on the Department of Finance with fairly wide-ranging debate.

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) back in 1970 and 1971 waxed eloquent, with my support and the support of many other people in this country, irrespective of partisan labels, when he talked about the need to see that there is always vested in this House the ultimate control over financial matters, the spending of the public purse.

Mr. Speaker, apply that to this particular bill. Here we have a bill which would wipe out the necessity of the Minister of Finance getting approval for certain expenditures and entering into certain agreements. What kind of agreements, Mr. Speaker? Are we talking about some housekeeping item here? No, Mr. Speaker. If you look at the provision in the bill where it would amend a couple of the sections, where it says, "Notwithstanding anything in section 10 or 12, notwithstanding any of that." He has got all kinds of power.

Now, what does section 10 say? What does section 12 say? Section 10 says -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

- "Subject to the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, the minister may enter into agreements with the Government of Canada or any agency thereof or any of them."

MR. J. CARTER:

It say nothing about the House of Assembly.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to be heard in silence. I do not mind intelligent interjections, which would exclude the gentleman for St. John's North at all times.

Mr. Speaker, I call to mind, May 6 and May 7, 1982, when a gentleman, allegedly representing the government of this Province, the gentleman for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) was in Ottawa and signed a certain fisheries agreement. He had full authority as minister to sign that agreement. What happened? We now know that the Premier of the day, who is the current Premier, disowned that signature on both occasions, on May 6 and May 7, both the fisheries agreement and the amended agreement. I bring it forward, Mr. Speaker, just by way of analogy.

Can you imagine what would happen if a Minister of Finance entered into an agreement with the Government of Canada, an agreement that the Premier of the day could not live with, for example, and the Premier of the day wanted to disown.

In the case that I have given you, in regard to the former Minister of Fisheries, obviously, the minister does not override what the government says, and the government, in its wisdom, chose a particular course of action and could override what the Minister of Fisheries had committed himself to on those two days. In the circumstance that the Bill is proposing here, you would have a situation where the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) was more

powerful than the government itself because he would have to back him up an act of this House saying, "Minister of Finance, notwithstanding the Lieutenant-Governor in Counsel" that is a nice phrase for Cabinet, notwithstanding the Cabinet, you can enter into all the agreements you want.

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of issues going here, one is of basic accountability and control by the House of the purse strings but, another important issue relates to the issue of Cabinet control, as a collective entity, over the day to day operation and the overall thrust of the government of the day. Now we hear the administration purposing something that conceivable cut it off at the knees. It is incredible. It is absolutely perposterous, Mr. Speaker! It is absolutely perposterous, that we would have a Bill which would seek to vest in one individual, this kind of power.

We are not talking just housekeeping power, we are going to give him authority, carte blanche, to enter into any agreement with the Government of Canada. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me recall the Fisheries Agreement analogy again, to make this point. The Premier is in Halifax now and he has got a view on the amount of transfer payments and it is a view that is decidedly different than the one held by the Prime Minister, by the way, who wants to cut back transfer payments by a couple billion dollars.

Our Prime Minister, Governor Mulroney, the Governor of Reagan's fifty-first state, wants to cut back transfer payments to the

Provinces by \$2 billion by 1991. Now the Premier, to his credit, says that is not good enough. To his discredit, he is not saying it very loud, by the way.

Mr. Speaker, suppose instead of the Premier up there today, it was the Minister of Finance with this Bill in his pocket. Assume this Bill had been passed and he had the full authority under Bill 56. Suppose he were in Halifax with the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Finance from the other Provinces and suppose, with his sweet talking capacity, which he uses effectively on Premier Buchanan yesterday. They were all smiles in the paper today. Everything is all patched up. Suppose the Prime Minister moved in and sweet talked the Ministers of Finance for various Provinces, including our own, and got him to sign an agreement about transfer payments. That is the kind of thing that is being talked about in Section 10, agreements with the Government of Canada. And suppose the Prime Minister or Mr. Wilson, the Minister of Finance got the gentleman for St. John's South, in his capacity as Minister of Finance, to sign an agreement. After the appropriate number of cocktails and well-fed people and enjoyable evenings, they got him to sign an agreement on transfer payments, where would that leave the Premier of the day, Mr. Speaker? Where would that leave the government of the day? We know where it left him in relation to the fisheries agreement that the member for Bonavista South signed. He could renege on it because he, the Premier, had an overriding power, the Cabinet of the Whole had an overriding power. This bill would remove that overriding power. It says 'notwithstanding,' it says forget

the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, forget Cabinet, give the power to one person. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman for St. John's South (Dr. Collins), in terms of his responsibilities in this House, gets his power and his mandate from a couple of constituents. As a member of this House, his mandate comes from the people who elected him in St. John's South. As a member of the Executive Council, a member of Cabinet, his power flows from the appointment by the Premier of him to that Cabinet. How can you have a situation, Mr. Speaker, through legislation or otherwise, where the minister appointed has more power than the person who appointed him, the Premier. I do not mean more power in aggregate, but has a power that is overriding. I mean it is unthinkable, Mr. Speaker.

It is a bill that has to go back and be reworked. It is a crazy bill, an absolutely crazy bill! It flies in the face of this whole process that we have here, the process of control by the House of Assembly over the purse strings, first of all, and the process of Cabinet acting as a collective entity, instead of twenty-two - as it is now, or eighteen or whatever the case may be - people going off in all different directions.

We know, Mr. Speaker, what happened-

MR. J. CARTER:

You know all about that.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I appeal to the gentleman who would like to make cheap remarks. I am not being partisan about this. I am trying to make some helpful remarks.

MR. PEACH:
(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:
I believe this bill is a mistake. I am saying to my friend for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) if he would rather get into cheap - I say to the member for Carbonear I pity the gentleman for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter), okay. But the gentleman for Carbonear is a gentleman whose ability I have some respect for. I say to him that if I were in a partisan shouting match I would expect him to respond in kind. What I am doing instead is giving the House the benefit of my views, as limited as they may be, on an issue that I am concerned about. I am not doing it in any partisan fashion. So I appeal to him to respond in kind.

Mr. Speaker, this bill I do not believe has been very well thought out. That is not an indictment of anybody. We have all done things that we have not thought enough about. This is a bill, Mr. Speaker, that has not been very thoroughly thought out. It has got just absolutely devastating ramifications. The example that I call to your mind again, without getting into the substance of it - although I would be quite prepared to, but this is not the time - the example I call to your mind again, we have had a case in the past two or three years where a minister of this administration has gone off and signed an agreement with the federal government, not once, but twice in successive days. The Premier of the day saw fit to disown that agreement. We all know that the Premier was right, the process was all wrong, but the

Premier was right to disown that particular agreement, even though, one of his own ministers had signed it.

I repeat, Mr. Speaker, he, the Premier, would not have that kind of prerogative if this legislation goes through. - Now if there were some limitations, then that is quite a different matter. Mr. Speaker, it will be argued that this is to make things convenient. It is not always possible to get the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, the Cabinet, together. I understand that. If this were to be a housekeeping bill or a bill to expedite those awkward moments when something has to be done now because you cannot get the Cabinet again, that is one issue. What is in this bill is another issue altogether. This would provide for a blanket provision whereby a minister would not have to go back to the Cabinet at all. If he in his wisdom thought that was being proposed by the Government of Canada was a good thing, he would be given complete unfettered authority, unbridled authority to sign agreements, not agreements just amounting to so many dollars limit, Mr. Speaker, but any agreement without limit, without limit in its dollar value, without limit in terms of its overall ramifications. Surely, Mr. Speaker, that was never intended, but that is what the bill allows. That is exactly what the bill allows and not only with the Government of Canada, Mr. Speaker, but if you look at the other aspect of this bill, look at Section 12, Section 12 of the current act provides that 'subject to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the minister may enter into any agreement within the object of the act,

enter into any agreement for which no specific provision is made elsewhere in this act, enter into any or all of the agreements referred to in (a) or (b).' In other words, complete blanket authority. Not only agreements with the Government of Canada but he can go out and enter into an agreement with a private company, with an individual or with a conglomerate of individuals. Mr. Speaker, that is pretty wide-ranging authority.

Mr. Speaker, we on this side will oppose this amendment. We will not do it for any partisan reason. We will do it for the reasons that we have given in the past few minutes. We do it because we feel it erodes the Cabinet principle. We feel it erodes further the House's control of the purse strings.

I put to gentlemen in the Chamber now who are in Cabinet, that this is a pretty untidy piece of business you have here. You could find yourselves in a situation where a Minister of Finance, not necessarily this Minister of Finance, does the equivalent of what the gentleman for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) did two or three years ago. He goes and signs an agreement that, in your wisdom, as ministers, you cannot subscribe to. There you have an out. Here you have no out. The Minister of Finance would have the law of the land to back him up, nothing less than the law of the land to support his unilateral action.

That is too much power, Mr. Speaker. It is the kind of power this House should never give to one individual and should never let go as the final custodian of the purse strings.

MR. J. CARTER:

Your time is up. Sit down in your seat.

MR. LUSH:

The hon. the member for St. John's North's time was up a long time ago.

MR. SIMMONS:

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is tempting to play his game and sink to his level. But, Mr. Speaker, some things are impossible even in this Chamber. He means well, Mr. Speaker. He actually means well.

MR. W. CARTER:

Do not get too terrible now.

MR. SIMMONS:

No, he actually means well. Genghis Khan meant well. Benito meant well. You see, Mr. Speaker, he wants to inject himself. Why should we deny him the pleasure of being the center of activity again, the center of focus again?

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman for St. John's North was once the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, the former Premier, Mr. Moores, recognized his considerable skill. That he put him as a square peg in a round hole is another issue. But he recognized his considerable skill. He says, "This fellow is such a ball of fire. There is a big head on his shoulders, there must be something in it. I think I will try him in education," but in the process, he put a square peg in a round hole. He really should have tried him Finance.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have the attention of every Cabinet Minister not only in this Chamber, but the ones who are listening in. The thought of the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter)

in the Ministry of Finance! Now, why did I not think about that before? Mr. Speaker, I need not have put the argument at all, just raised the spectre to the Cabinet that one day, somehow, the gentleman from St. John's North might be the Minister of Finance, and might have the kind of power that is proposed in Bill 56. I mean, I rest my case! Imagine, Mr. Speaker, what a disaster that would be, to give him the power to rush off and sign agreements with the Government of Canada. Can you see him now, Mr. Speaker, putting his x on them?

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is not a frivolous matter, however. This bill is nothing to be frivolous about. This bill would take substantial authority away from the House and would take substantial authority away from Cabinet.

MR. J. CARTER:
Read the bill.

MR. SIMMONS:
Oh, I have read it and it says in part, "The Department of Finance Act is amended by adding immediately after section 12 the following: Notwithstanding that the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council is required for an agreement under section 10 or 12, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may, from time to time, approve terms, conditions and monetary limits subject to which the Minister may, without prior approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, enter into agreements under section 10 or 12."

MR. J. CARTER:
What has that got to do with the House of Assembly?

MR. SIMMONS:

The member asks, What has that got to do with the House of Assembly? A very good question. We, Mr. Speaker, in this House, hold the Executive Council, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, the Cabinet, responsible for expenditures. We pass a budget as a House, and the ministry, as a whole, must operate within that budget. Now, under this system - I put a question to the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms), my good friend, my blood relative, almost kissing cousin from Grand Falls, one of the best Speakers this House has ever had, I put a question to him, theoretically, what about an expenditure under some head in his department? And he looks at me and says, "Mr. Speaker, I have to say to the member for Fortune-Hermitage, I am not answerable anymore because the Minister of Finance has entered into an agreement with the Government of Canada which undercuts what my authority would have been there." That is my answer to the member for St. John's North. You see, once you give blanket authority to the Minister of Finance to enter into agreements, by implication some of those agreements could undercut the existing rules in this particular Chamber.

MR. J. CARTER:
You have not answered the question at all.

MR. SIMMONS:
Well, I have answered it my satisfaction, and I am more interested in pleasing me than you, at this moment in time.

The bill erodes, or would erode the authority of the House, and I ask the Government House Leader

(Mr. Marshall) to have a look at it. It is a dangerous bill.

MR. J. CARTER:
Do not be so silly.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:
A man of fairly limited vocabulary, you will agree. It is a dangerous bill and I would ask the gentleman, the Government House Leader, to take it back and have a look at it. Surely he did not intend to erode the power of the House? Surely he did not intend to undermine the Cabinet role in government to this degree? And I submit this is what he does with this piece of legislation, and for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the bill, before it goes any further, would be either withdrawn completely or amended to make it a housekeeping bill. Because I am sure, Mr. Speaker, it started out to be a housekeeping bill but, then, as legislative drafters have a way of doing, they begin to cover all circumstances and all possible situations. But, of course, the drafters are not to be blamed, they just provide the words which will make the bill workable, it is the politicians who brought it here who must give the direction to the drafters as to what they really intend. If they intend it only as a housekeeping bill, let them say that, if they intend it as a blatant effort to further centralize power into the hands of one of the few Tories on that side of the House, and there are only four over there, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall), the gentleman for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter), the gentleman - I am sorry, there are

only three and a half over there, the gentleman for St. John's East, the gentleman for Waterford - Kenmount (Mr. Ottenheimer), the gentleman for St. John's South (Dr. Collins) - that is three - and the member for St. John's North, that is three and a half. There are only three and a half Tories over there, Mr. Speaker, altogether, and this is a blatant effort, I believe, to centralize, even further, the power within the little Tory clique, because they really cannot trust anybody else over there, Mr. Speaker, only themselves. If you look at the real power on that side, it is vested in those three, in particular. And the seating in instructive, Mr. Speaker. The power, the triumvirate sits there, and the brains behind the outfit sits directly behind - the power behind the throne, the brain thrust. Why waste him as Minister of Education when he can sit there and pull the strings, give the advice, mutter the sweet little poison comments he mutters everyday to inspire his three Tory colleagues in the House? We cannot, Mr. Speaker, give this kind of power to anybody - a Tory, a Progressive Conservative, a Liberal or anybody. This is too much power for one individual, and I appeal to those who will vote on this to look very clearly at the unjustifiable concentration of power which this Bill represents. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear! Hear!

MR. J. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, before we go to vote on this Bill, I would remind the House that the former ten-day Minister of Sleaze is not really in his proper place. His proper place is out by the elevator, preventing it from working, as he did once, to derail a particular vote in this House, and I am surprised he is not out there now.

MR. SIMMONS:

On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of privilege, the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

This is the kind of thing that is not needed in this House. I am as good or as bad at throwing that kind of stuff as he is, but I just get up on two matters of information. I am a kind of disappointed that the Speaker did not interrupt him when he used the term 'sleaze', because that is clearly unparliamentary. But if he wants to throw around those terms I will not play his game, because by asking they be withdrawn, we only draw attention to them. I am not getting into that, so he can call me anything he wants to, except I hope I will get the protection of the Chair.

The point about the elevators I want to come back to -

MR. J. CARTER:

Do!

MR. SIMMONS:

- because I know what he talking about. That night, Sir, I was sitting in this Chamber. Now, that lie has been repeated a number of times.

MR. J. CARTER:

Prove it.

MR. SIMMONS:

I was sitting in this Chamber.

MR. PEACH:

Carbonear.

MR. SIMMONS:

As my gentleman friend from Carbonear (Mr. Peach) confirms in the undertone, he knows who was involved and he will confirm that I was not involved. But this is the kind of lie, Mr. Speaker, that, if you say it often enough, gets a bit of credibility. Now, you may think that is smart, St. John's North, but it is low, it is cowardly and, for all your big, brute size, if you keep that kind of nonsense up, we will go outside. Because I am absolutely sick and tired of your snivelling cowardice, your absolutely snivelling cowardice - okay?

I give notice, Mr. Speaker, that if anything I said was unparliamentary I withdraw it, and I give notice that everytime that poor, benighted, pitiful but hon. member for St. John's North utters a lie, I shall be there to correct him.

MR. LUSH:

He is lower than a snake's belly in a wagon rut.

MR. SIMMS:

To that point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of privilege, the hon. the Minister for Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Somebody should come to the defense of the hon. member for St.

John's North. Now, I realize that in the heat of debate certain things are said from time to time, on both sides of the House, and I clearly heard the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) use what I considered to be some unparliamentary language in presenting his own point of privilege.

MR. LUSH:

You are not defending that kind of nonsense?

MR. SIMMS:

I am defending that kind of nonsense in the sense that it should not take place on either side of the House, and that is my point.

MR. SIMMONS:

I withdrew it.

MR. SIMMS:

The hon. member withdrew it, but he said it. The point is it should not have been said, it should not be allowed to be said in the Chamber, on either side of the House. I do not think it was a specific point of privilege - certainly not a prima facie case - and that is what the hon. member rose on, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I must rule that it certainly is not a prima facie case of privilege. About the comments that the hon. member for St. John's North (J. Carter) made, they did not register with me. I can quite honestly and quite frankly say that. What the incident was, or if it referred to any particular incident, I am certainly not aware of it.

MR. J. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. J. CARTER:

While I was looking out through the door, I was trying to estimate the distance between two elevators and I was going to suggest that the hon. member, if he really tried, could probably hold two elevators out of operation. I think three would really be beyond his capacity, but two would certainly be possible.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Maybe the hon member would confine himself to the bill.

MR. J. CARTER:

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the member who just took his seat, the hon. member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons), did not quite clearly read the bill, he was speaking in ignorance. This bill has no bearing on the House of Assembly whatsoever. In fact, I would perhaps agree with some members opposite when they say that perhaps there is no need of this bill, because if the Cabinet wishes to give some power to an individual minister, that is clearly within their right. I find it extraordinary that anyone would bother to hold up the business of this House to even discuss this bill at any great length, and I do not intend to do so myself. It is quite clearly a housekeeping bill and objections to it, I think, have to be looked upon in the light of obstructionism.

Before I sit down, I would like to make one point and that is that

suggesting that this House or this government in any way resembles the Fourth Reich, the Third Reich or any Reich - and these terms are loaded - I would remind members opposite who it was that said Hilter was a great man, said it publicly, and said it, moreover, to a gathering of war veterans. So I would remind members opposite of their heritage, their very precious heritage, and I think the sooner they disown these kinds of remarks the sooner they will be a credible party.

MR. LUSH:

Who said that?

MR. J. CARTER:

You know very well who said it. It is a matter of public record. With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will take my seat.

MR. TULK:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

The hon. gentleman cannot be allowed to get up in this House and mud-rake and throw slurs at a gentleman who served this Province very, very well, much better than the hon. gentleman ever will, and be allowed to get away with it. It is scandalous! The hon. gentleman was the very man who would not give that same gentleman the right to make his last speech in this House. He should be ashamed to even bring up the name, because he does not fit in the same context at all.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For two reasons I would like to speak to this particular bill. First of all the hon. member for Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. Simmons), who gave such a thoughtful, reasoned, sensible expose of this particular piece of legislation is absolutely right and I would like to support him in his position. The second reason is that the interjection of the member for St. John's North (J. Carter) pointed out to me how shallow, how very shallow the understanding of legislation is on that side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, in my discourse I will cover both of these points.

I would like to say, first of all, that, as an elected member of this hon. House, I assume that there is a certain amount of authority and power that goes along with it. I assumed that I would have the privilege of taking part in discussion on matters dealing with the Province, on matters dealing with our future, with my future, and that I would have the opportunity to contribute to decisions that were being made with regard to the governing of the Province.

Ordinarily, matters that are of great provincial concern, concern for the Province as a whole or sections of the Province, would come to this House for approval in the form of legislation - ordinarily. Mr. Speaker, obviously everything, every decision that is made by

government, cannot come before the House. So, at some point in time, a mechanism had to be devised so that the time of the House would not unnecessarily be tied up in matters that were not of significant importance to the Province. So the concept of Cabinet responsibility and Orders in Council and so on has a great deal of legitimacy, where you have a group of hon. ministers who sit down and discuss matters that are not the matters of general importance to the Province. They discuss matters and do things, pass Orders in Council, that cause things to happen in the Province. All right? These are things of a housekeeping nature or matters that, for some legitimate reason or another, cannot be made public in this hon. House. It is similar to town councils in the Province having private sessions to deal with matters that, for some reason or another, cannot be made public or that are simply of a housekeeping nature and are not of general concern to the people in the community.

So the mechanism is set up. In this House we discuss matters of general importance. I assumed when I came here that what we discussed in this House would be important and would affect legislation. With the party system and the way it operates, Mr. Speaker, that is not necessarily so. Decisions are made on bills, as has already been pointed out by another hon. member, decisions are already made and no matter what we say on this side about this particular bill, it is going to pass because of numbers. Perhaps what we are saying on this side does not have an impact on this particular piece of legislation, and cannot because of the partisan nature of what

goes on here.

I would like to think that things could be a little different. I would like to think that we can have an impact, that ordinary members of the House can have an impact on the legislation. But, as I said a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, I realize that many things need not come to the House. There are many things that need not come into this hon. House. They are handled by Cabinet and whatever the mechanisms are in Cabinet, that is the problem of Cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, this Order in Council process that I have referred to, that all hon. members are aware of, has possibilities of misuse. A process that was meant for housekeeping or things that really were not of concern to broad areas of the Province and so on. These things can be expedited through Orders in Council and not tie up the time of the House. But, that process can be misused. Cabinet can make decisions of a general nature affecting people all over the Province. These decisions can be done through Order in Council and we never even hear of them, we never even know what has gone on until, at some point in time, some individual out there or some group out there tries to do something and they are told 'no, you cannot do it. It is against legislation,' legislation that they did even know existed.

So there is a possibility that the Orders in Council that process can be abused, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest to you that this process has been abused in the past.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! I wonder would the hon. member mind if I interrupted

him for a minute?

When there is a motion for adjournment at 5:30 there are three questions to be debated. The first is by the member for Bonavista North to the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies. He is not satisfied with the answer he got relating to the Canada Jobs Strategy. The second one is from the member for Gander to the Minister of Public Works, re the press facilities. The third is from the member for Windsor - Buchans to the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications about Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro's new rate structure.

Thank you.

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying the process of Orders in Council has been abused in the past. There have been decisions made that have been of a broad nature, important to the whole Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and, yet, they have been done in secret, in private, by Cabinet, by a group, I think, at the time, eighteen or nineteen Cabinet ministers and the people of the Province have never known about.

I refer to one Order in Council in particular that took over control of industrial land in the Province that the provincial government had any monetary input into it at all. It took complete control of this land and put it in the hands of the Province without people in the Province knowing that that had been done. The first time that this particular administration

wants to use that Order in Council, they will use it. There are municipalities around this Province who still think that they have control over industrial parks. But they cannot.

MR. SIMMS:

What has this got to do with the bill?

MR. BAKER:

The Minister for Trees, for Forestry Lands or Forest Resources whatever it happens to be,-

MR. TULK:

Trees.

MR. BAKER:

Trees.

MR. TULK:

Trees and budworms.

MR. BAKER:

- has interjected, what has this got to do with the bill? Mr. Speaker, I am spinning a thread, and I am leading up to the connection. I would ask the hon. minister to be patient for just a couple of more minutes.

MR. TULK:

He would not understand that.

MR. BAKER:

I will tie it altogether in a neat little knot.

MR. TULK:

Put it in baby talk for him.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, there was an example of a decision that was made that was important to almost every municipality in this Province, including the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) own district, a decision that was important to every municipality in

this Province, and yet they did not know about it. Nobody knew about it; a very important decision from the point of view of industrial development of the Province.

I make the point here, Mr. Speaker, that I am not saying that that was a bad decision. There is the catch, I am not saying that that was a bad decision. I am saying that at some point government has to plan industrial development in this Province and if this was their mechanism for doing it, then fine, but because it was a decision that was so far-reaching, they should have had the guts, Mr. Speaker, to put it to the legislature so that it could be debated properly and the people of the Province would know what is going on in this very important area. Unfortunately, they did not do this. They decided to grab - the great land grab, I called it - to grab the land in the Province without even notifying the people from whom they were grabbing it and, at some point, many area of the Province are going to recognize what happened.

Mr. Speaker, I am gradually coming up to the bill and what it suggests happens to that process. This process, although it seems to be sensible, and although there are sensible reasons for having the process, has been abused and goodness knows how many times. I gave one example, I happened to find out about it; there are many, many more hidden in the depths of that particular administration that we do not know about, I am sure. That process can be abused, even though there are twenty hon. ministers taking part in the decision.

Mr. Speaker, we come to what I am leading up to, this particular bill. Now we are told that 'We are going to make these decisions or many decisions; we are going to take it a step further and we are not going to make them so that twenty people can make a decision in secret, now we are going to do it so that one man, one hon. minister, can now make decisions that formerly would be made through the Order in Council process.' One hon. minister can now make that decision on his own without prior approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council which, as one of my colleagues pointed out, is a fancy name for Cabinet. One minister can make decisions, can make expenditures and can sign agreements on behalf of government without first going through the Order in Council process, the Cabinet decision-making process. Well, I can think of all kinds of abuses that this can be put to.

I am not suggesting that this hon. Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) is going to abuse this process. I am not suggesting that at all. But there have been instances in Canadian history where there have been people who have been elected who would abuse this circumstance. It is possible, through some miracle, or whatever the reverse of that is, we could elect a person who was basically crooked and he would become the Minister of Finance, and he would have this ability to make expenditures, to sign agreements, without first having the approval of Cabinet. Mr. Speaker, I think that this is extremely dangerous.

Members opposite might come back and say, 'But we know the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) would never do that, that he would first

of all informally check with all of us or something, and this is simply to allow him to expedite matters. But, Mr. Speaker, that is not in this legislation. The legislation says the Minister of Finance can expend money and can sign agreements without first going through the Cabinet process. That is very clear, very plain, Mr. Speaker, absolutely. It gives an awful lot of power and responsibility to one man. I am not saying that the present Minister of Finance cannot handle that. I am not saying anything of the kind. I am saying that there could be Ministers of Finance in this Province who would make this bill an absolute disaster. I am thinking that maybe the drafters of this particular bill did not really carry the thought process far enough. When we come up with legislation we have to make sure that that legislation can apply in all cases and is still valid, no matter what circumstances and how they change, no matter who the Minister of Finance is, and no matter how he operates. That particular piece of legislation should be a solid and good piece of legislation. Mr. Speaker, obviously this is not. The restrictions are not there and I think it is removing the decision-making process one step too far away from this House and that is the connection between this bill and this hon. House. It removes the decision-making process one step further away from this hon. House.

I can think of an awful lot of possibilities that are tied in with this. I am wondering what the motivation is, Mr. Speaker, why bring in this particular bill? Why say this Order-in-Council process is not good enough, we will allow the

Minister of Finance to make expenditures, to sign agreements, without going through the Orders-in-Council process? Is it simply that the Orders-in-Council process is too clumsy, is that it? Is it that they have difficulty getting enough ministers together on a Thursday morning, or whenever it is, to have a Cabinet meeting so they can make those decisions? Is it that there is too much piling up on the Cabinet table that is not handled and we want to remove some of this so it can be handled quickly? Is this the problem? Is there so much that the Cabinet is handling that they cannot do their job properly? Are they having difficulty with their departments, Mr. Speaker, so they cannot sit down in Cabinet meetings and go through the process of handling the documents that are placed before them? Is this the reason?

MR. BAIRD:

You will never find out.

MR. CALLAN:

Nor will you 'Ray.'

MR. BAKER:

You tried for long enough.

Mr. Speaker, is there trouble in Cabinet? That is another thing that comes to my mind. Are there problems in Cabinet? Are there factions that have developed? There are twenty-two Cabinet Ministers. Have they developed factions in Cabinet? Is the inner-Cabinet, if I can all them that, having difficulties persuading the lesser Cabinet Ministers to go along with them? Is this what is happening? Is there becoming a difficulty of control? Mr. Speaker, we know the way it happens. A few people get together and make a decision, a

few Cabinet Ministers, the inner group get together and make decisions, then they sit down at a Cabinet meeting and they persuade their Cabinet colleagues, who then have to show a solid front. Once it is decided this is what is to be done, the Cabinet presents a solid front and then they go to a caucus meeting.

Now to be honest, Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the point is of members opposite having caucus meetings. I do not know what the purpose is. Because just about everybody over there is in Cabinet and once a decision is made in Cabinet, once the inner circle persuades Cabinet and if there is a dissenting group, then eventually they go along, then there is no point going to caucus because they already have just about everybody in Cabinet.

MR. J. CARTER:

We are very democratic.

MR. BAKER:

Now then, is this a case of where in Cabinet, which is the crucial place, that the few ministers in control are having difficulty persuading their other Cabinet colleagues, so they say, "Oh, we will come up with a mechanism whereby a single minister can make these decisions, one single minister can make these decisions." This minister can spend and can sign agreements, but then maybe afterwards, and maybe the Government House Leader will straighten it up, I assume he would have to afterwards come back to Cabinet and say, "This is what I have done and I want you, in retrospect, after the fact, to give me the okay." I am assuming a decision has to come back to Cabinet at some point.

I wonder if it is a mechanism for the inner Cabinet to avoid having to convince all the rest of those hon. Cabinet ministers to go along with a particular proposal or to go along with a particular agreement. Is this the kind of mechanism that this is? I do not know and I am looking for answers. There are all kinds of possibilities. I can see that mechanism happening in this particular Cabinet. I can see the problems that the inner Cabinet must have with some of the other Cabinet ministers who are, perhaps, a little bit independent and so on and do not want to always tow the line as laid down by the inner Cabinet. I can see that happening. There are a lot of very independent gentlemen on the opposite side.

So I wonder about the reason for this particular piece of legislation. Is it a mechanism that points out some kind of problem within the Cabinet? Is it a mechanism simply to expedite matters? If it is a mechanism simply to expedite matters, then that is certainly not spelled out in the bill. It is left very open and very broad, 'to make certain expenditures.' I know that limits are going to be set on these expenditures sometime by Cabinet but it does not say what these limits will be. Is the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) allowed to authorize an expenditure of \$25,000, \$500 or \$1,000? He certainly would not be allowed to make an expenditure for \$1 million without telling Cabinet. That is a huge amount of money.

MR. FLIGHT:

The Minister of Forestry is not in the inner Cabinet.

MR. BAKER:

The Minister of Forestry, I do not think so. I do not think he is in the inner Cabinet anymore. Was he ever there? I am not sure.

Surely the Minister of Finance could not just go and spend \$1 million without going to Cabinet or \$10 million or \$20 million as some members have suggested. I do not think that that would be possible. Surely Cabinet would not give him that particular right. And to sign agreements, what kind of agreements? What kind of agreements can the Minister of Finance sign? What limitations are put on the kind of agreements that the minister can sign? Are they simply internal agreements? Are they agreements with outside companies in this Province? Are they agreements with other provinces? Can the Minister of Finance do interprovincial agreements without going through the Cabinet process first? Can the Minister of Finance go and sign agreements with the Government of Canada without going through Cabinet? If that is so then, Mr. Speaker, if this is anything more than a simple expedition of certain trivial matters, then I certainly cannot support this particular bill. It is dangerous.

I do not want to see one man, whether it be the Premier, the Minister of Finance or any hon. member, having the authority to sign agreements on behalf of this Province without it first going through Cabinet. Remember, I have my doubts about Cabinet, but at least there are twenty-two people who are collectively responsible for a decision that is passed through Orders in Council. That is much more of a safeguard than having one man who is responsible for making the decision.

Mr. Speaker, just to summarize, the hon. House makes decisions of a general nature that has to do with the direction that this Province has taken. I think that is the way it should be. We discuss matters and we discuss legislation that is of importance to the Province as a whole. Then, so that the time of the House is not tied up with trivia or to handle matters that could be dangerous, if made public - almost like the case of a national emergency of some kind - we have the Order of Council mechanism where Cabinet makes the decisions. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that that is enough to handle any eventuality. The ministers make their own individual decisions in their departments within the limitations of their budget. That is fine. That is all the trivia taken care of and the emergency matters are taken care of by Orders in Council. That is fine.

We are now going to add one more step to that and instead of fifty-two hon. gentlemen making decision or thirty-six or twenty-two hon. ministers making a decision, now we are going to say that one man, one hon. minister is now going to have the authority to make certain expenditures. We do not know what they are. We have no idea what certain expenditures will be. One hon. gentleman is given the responsibility or the power to make decisions regarding certain expenditures, as well as to sign agreements and these agreements could possibly be even agreements with the Government of Canada.

I have said that is a very dangerous process. It is a very dangerous thing to do.

MR. J. CARTER:

The hon. gentleman is repeating himself.

MR. BAKER:

That is what a summary is. The hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter), I know, went to school at one point and he knows that when you summarize something, it is obviously a repeat of what you said. We have to do that to tie it together for the duller students, you understand that. It is a repeat. It is a dangerous process, Mr. Speaker, and we should not be going ahead with this particular bill.

As I have said, and I know that the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) is going to say, but, 'you know, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), we trust him.'

MR. TULK:

What?

MR. BAKER:

That is what he is going to say, 'we trust him.'

MR. TULK:

I thought you said we do.

MR. BAKER:

No, no. The Government House Leader is going to say, speaking as the Government House Leader, speaking for members opposite, 'we trust the Minister of Finance to make the right decisions.' But in this legislation that has to do with expenditures of money, with signing of agreements, we cannot leave it simply to trust. We could end up with a scoundel sitting in that chair, the Minister's of Finance's chair, it is possible.

MR. TULK:

We already have one in the

Premier's chair.

MR. BAKER:

No, no, I am talking about the Minister of Finance. I am being relevant to this bill, as is obvious. I am being relevant to this bill. We could have, Mr. Speaker, a scoundel sitting in that chair, as bad as that may seem. It is possible we could have a scoundel sitting in that chair. I would never want to give a scoundel the opportunity and the power to be able to sign agreements, to be able to expend certain sums of money and to sign agreements with other governments and so on without prior consent and without prior approval of Cabinet.

So I realize that my time is up there, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave, by leave!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No leave! No leave!

MR. BAKER:

I know that my time is up, Mr. Speaker. I would simply say that I would like to hear from some of the members opposite, some of their ideas. I am talking now in an non-partisan nature.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TULK:

You always do.

MR. BAKER:

I have not thrown any mud. I have not called people names. I have simply tried to explain that it is a dangerous process. I would like to hear from some of the independent thinkers that I talked about. I said that some of these

ministers were independent thinkers and they could look at something like this and decide whether it is good or bad on the basis of the fact, on the basis of the bill and not what they are told. I am waiting, Mr. Speaker. I will wait to hear from some of these hon. ministers who are independent thinkers and who are willing to admit that there is a mistake that could be made. I think there is a serious mistake made with this bill. I am very anxious to hear from some of these hon. ministers and what they have got to say about the very, very serious impact this Bill could have.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, if I thought everybody else was finished, I would speak for ten seconds and then let the minister close the Bill. But I have a feeling that the hon. members want to get on and on and on and go on about this Bill because it is a Finance Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I listened with a great deal of interest, in fact, I have not left my seat at all, to listen to the member for Bonavista North (Mr. Lush), the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) and the member for Gander (Mr. Baker). Three gentleman, who, by the way I have a certain amount of respect for. They certainly should have some intelligence. They certainly have enough

experience, in various forms, to be able to add something of substance or something sensible to this debate.

The hon. member for Gander, concluded his remarks, I think by saying, "Now I would like to hear someone from the other side, in a nonpartisan way, react to what I have said. I did not sling any mud, I did not call anybody any names." In fact, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Gander spoke for thirty minutes and said absolutely nothing, not only did he not throw names or not sling mud, he did not say anything substantial on that particular piece of legislation. A lot of members in this House, old and new, have the feeling that because there is a thirty minute time allocation for speaking, then they must get up and speak for thirty minutes. They must fill up that time. Members opposite, in particular, are always noted for that but, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that there are some members in this House who can say in ten minutes and make as much sense, certainly, as the member for Gander took thirty minutes to say, which was nothing. In fact, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that all three of the speakers I just mentioned, if they put all of their time together you could probably capsule it, as the hon. member for Gander tried to do, in about a three minute speech. A three minute summary and he even agrees with me, I see him over there.

Mr. Speaker, that is all irrelevant what they have said. Nothing is relevant to the bill. I mean, the member for Gander talks about how this will limit his ability to be able to come into the House and have a free and open discussion on matters that

concern the people of the Province. This is what he is saying, I noted it. Mr. Speaker, this Bill has nothing whatsoever to do with the prevention of somebody speaking in the House on matters of concern to his constituents or to the people of the Province.

This Bill does not refer to matters that will come to the House. They would not be matters that would even come to the House. He went on twenty minutes or so with some fairyland kind of philosophy. I do not know how to describe it in his own mind but, 'I wonder is that minister strong or I wonder is that minister weak.' A bunch on nonsense, Mr. Speaker.

Now the member for Fortune - Hermitage and the member for Bonavista North, as a matter of fact, the gentleman who I said I had a great deal of respect for, said basically the same thing. He talked about this bill 'throwing the Minister of Finance's power wide open, to be able to do anything he wants, that is what this Bill says,' says the member for Bonavista North. What nonsense and what foolishness, Mr. Speaker! Absolute nonsense! It is simply a housekeeping measure and hon. members opposite know it. The reasons for it is clear. In fact, from time to time, we get criticized by members opposite because there are delays in executing certain matters or issues, agreements or whatever and from time to time, because of the process and the length of time it takes to get certain matters through, it takes a bit of time.

Let me draw to the member's attention, the Clause 12.1 in the Bill which tells you what this

piece of legislation does. It is a three-line Bill, by the way. It says, "notwithstanding that the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council is required for an agreement under section (10) or (12), the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may, from time to time, approve terms, conditions, and monetary limits subject to which the minister may, without prior approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, enter into agreements under section (10) or (12)."

So any agreements that he will enter into will be under terms and conditions and monetary limits. It will be quite acceptable, set by the Cabinet. What is the difference? Either the Cabinet approves the agreement or the minister may approve them. Can the hon. member tell me the argument to that? He cannot, of course, because there is no argument to it.

Let me just tell you what has been happening now, Mr. Speaker, if I may in the two minutes I have. What has been happening in this House for the last month or so, the last thirty days? We have had several speakers, for example, on this minor bill, taking up the whole afternoon and said nothing substantial at all. We have had members opposite who spent twenty-one days debating Supplementary Supply and I bet you nobody can recall what they asked or what they said in the debate for that twenty-one day period. We have had a month of question periods where the only questions have been about something in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition. Nothing else, nothing substantive, nothing substantial! I suggest to hon. members

opposite, in particular, they should stop wasting the time of the House, stop trying to thwart the business of the government and the people of the Province in their concern and let us get on with something substantial, something which the people of this Province would be interested in hearing from the maw mouths opposite.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

It now being five-thirty, there is a motion to adjourn. I will call on the hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am sorry that the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power) is not here to whom - or the minister responsible for perpetrating that felonious jobs creation programme, the federal jobs creation programme on the people of this Province. Now it is unfortunate that he is not here to answer for signing for that job programme.

Mr. Speaker, just to acquaint hon. members with my line of questioning, I was asking the minister, in view of the fact that this programme was not tailored to the needs of this Province, whether or not that he had made representation to his federal counterpart, the hon. Flora MacDonald, to express his concerns and to ensure that that jobs creation programme was geared to the needs of this Province.

I do not know whether hon. members can remember but I would ask them if they can remember to try and conceptualize what perception the

minister left them with? Quite clearly, Mr. Speaker, he pooh-poohed every question that I asked, he condemned every question that I asked saying that I was not in favour of jobs for this Province and made no reference to whether or not he had made representation to his federal counterpart, because we were trying to raise the concern.

The first solution to a problem is to recognize that there is one. We cannot rectify a wrong if we do not realize there is a problem. Mr. Speaker, let me very quickly tell hon. members opposite about the kind of job programme that they signed for the people of this Province.

First of all, they signed an agreement for a job creation programme that is geared to the private sector. We know what happened to the students Summer employment programme when it was geared to the public sector. That is the underlying philosophy, that monies be granted to the private sector to fine tune and to improve business technology and industrial technology. Mr. Speaker, that is fine, if you have a private sector. We have no private sector in this Province. So that is the first thing that is wrong, to assume that we have a private sector in this Province and we do not have a private sector sufficient enough to be able to take advantage of that particular programme.

There are other componets, and I am rushing through. I wish I had more time. There is another component that is called training, that the programme must have a certain training element within it, and it is to last sixteen weeks. In all honesty, what kind

of training can be provided in sixteen weeks? Most of our post-secondary institutions provide training lasting anywhere from three to six, seven or eight years. This programme is going to train people in sixteen weeks. How naive, Mr. Speaker!

Secondly, there is also a guideline - listen to this - with that training component that says that the skills attained or the training provided must be for a skill required in that local area. Mr. Speaker, how can we create jobs in areas where, for example, people are applying for, a wharf. Who is going to build a wharf? A carpenter - there are unemployed carpenters out there. If we do a job requiring electricians, there are hundreds of unemployed electricians. So, if we follow that guideline that they must be trained for a skill that is needed in the area, there is not a programme that will be approved in this Province.

So the programme is not geared to the needs of our Province. This training component is just a lot of fiddle faddle, Mr. Speaker. It is nonsense. Call it what it is, the same kind of a programme that was in existence, instead of forcing these organizations. We have no private sector, we have councils, Lions Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, recreation committees, applying for the same programmes that they applied for in previous years. What this training requirement has done is to discourage people from applying because they realize that they could not meet all of these requirements and they thought that is the way it was going to be and they have not applied. So there are communities in this Province that have not applied because they

did not think that they could draft the application.

The other aspect, Mr. Speaker, is the entry requirements which say that a person must be unemployed twenty-four out of the previous thirty weeks before he is hired on the programme. That means a person who has seven insurable weeks, he or she cannot be employed. Mr. Speaker, that puts them in a very bad position because it is just as easy to find ten weeks work as it is to find three. Where are they going to find the work? So if you have six weeks or more, you cannot be employed.

Just to finish it, Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister whether he was concerned. The minister said no. He thought it was a good programme. I asked whether he made representation to his federal counterpart.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. LUSH:
I would just like to be permitted to read a few lines in conclusion.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. member's time has elapsed.

Is there leave?
SOME HON. MEMBERS:
No.

MR. MARSHALL:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL:
We cannot give leave, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Canada

Jobs Strategy Programme - now here this - the hon. gentleman, I hope he will hear it. I doubt whether he will understand it, but he is going to hear it anyway. Some have already been approved under the special fisheries response section. The hon. gentleman will be glad to know that there are between ten and twelve, to date, already approved in that great district of Bonavista Trinity Conception under the aegis of Captain Morrissey. He is in charge of that and he is bringing it back. In St. John's West there have been others and in every federal districts there have been seventy to eighty -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

Hon. gentleman will be glad to know that 70 or 80 per cent of the applications that have been anticipated have been received. The hon. gentleman will also be glad to know or I hope he will understand - I doubt whether he will understand, but hope springs eternal- that the programme is proceeding on a continuous intake of applications. You have to get the applications first. I think the hon. gentleman would understand that. You have to get the applications. Okay? So you get the applications and then you have to read the applications. So you read and review the applications and then afterwards, Mr. Speaker, then there is approval of the applications. So, there are these three steps, Mr. Speaker.

The final cut-off date, by the way, to receive applications - and

you have to receive them first before you can process them and the hon. gentleman understands that - is December 6, 1985.

Mr. Speaker, within the next week or ten days we expect the federal Minister of Employment and Immigration (Flora MacDonald) to approve a large amount of them, so the point of the matter is the programme is ongoing.

The hon gentleman or one of the hon. gentleman's colleagues got up yesterday about Branch. The hon. gentleman was able to say that because of the efforts of himself and the member for St. Mary's-The Capes (Mr. Hearn), the Minister of Education, that Branch had already been approved. The hon. gentleman is behind the times. That is all I can say because I do not want to add insult to injury. I do not want to really insult the hon. gentleman. I am not in the mood to do that this afternoon. All I am doing is conveying information, I hope, in a very friendly way. The hon. gentlemen must realize you must receive the application first, then you have to read it, and then you have to approve it. That is the process and it is all ongoing now.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

This is a question for the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young) about the press facilities.

The hon. member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The facilities that I am referring to, as everybody recognizes, are the facilities that are now in place on the eleventh floor. A

few years ago that particular facility was a museum. About three years ago a decision was made that the press, and rightly so, needed proper facilities to conduct their business in the House. So the museum was moved, the room was renovated and turned into a press room.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, because the Cabinet has been displaced by the Premier, the Cabinet has now gone, not had to go, have now gone to the eleventh floor. I suppose there are changes made up there since the Cabinet went up there. Therefore, the press has been displaced. These are the facts of the matter and I am sure the minister follows it and really they are okay.

The other day, and this will happen quite often, Mr. Speaker, whenever CBC is doing a remote from that particular room, the small room that they were pushed off into, it makes the room rather difficult for any other press to use, so that the other press, in doing their interviews and so on during the course of the afternoon, have to do their interviews in rather uncomfortable circumstances. They really have no place to go except the hallways, the stairways, the corridors and so on. They do not have a proper place to use. Even when the remote is not being done, that room is very cramped and if there is any more than one thing going on at a time in there, it gets very confusing.

I think that I should at this point mention that it is very important to have proper press facilities. It is the only way that the people in the Province know what is going on in here. If we are debating serious matters,

the Province will know about it. If we are going on with foolishness, the Province will know about it. The Province will know, through the press, what is going on in this House. Because of that, we have to make sure that the press has proper facilities to do their job; that they can do it under very stringent time limits because they have time limits and they have people to do their things quickly and comprehensively. Now, if the press does not have a proper facility then the public is not going to know what is going on in this House.

Aside from the fact that this situation shows an insensitivity to the press, the fact that they are now out for goodness knows how long, goodness knows how many years until the new legislature is built and all this kind of thing, the total insensitivity to the needs of the press; aside from that, let us just think about the press process. If the press which is here in the House of Assembly cannot do their job properly, then the major source of information to the Province is the Government Information Service, which daily, hourly churns out tons of press releases by Cabinet Ministers and nothing from the other side of the House, and, Mr. Speaker, this leads to a very unbalanced perception of what is going on in here and getting out to the general public.

So there are two points here, number one, the insensitivity to the needs of the press and, the second point, what is happening is going to tend to lead to an unbalanced coverage, balanced towards all of these ministers, Mr. Speaker, who can turn out reams of stuff on their little

terminals which they have in all those places around the Province.

In light of this, Mr. Speaker, in light of these things, my question had to do with the minister providing proper facilities for the press as soon as possible. I obviously was not satisfied with his answer, because there really was no answer - he said, 'Well, sometime.' That is essentially what he said and, Mr. Speaker, that is the reason I was dissatisfied with his answer.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Gander, in his closing remarks, said I said, 'As soon as possible.' Mr. Speaker, as soon as possible, I assure the hon. member and assure the press gallery, that will happen. Mr. Speaker, how things change! When we did the press gallery upstairs a few years ago, strips were torn off me and torn off this government for doing an elaborate job on the eleventh floor, we were criticized left, right and center for wasting the people's money.

MR. FUREY:

And for taking out the museum.

MR. YOUNG:

Now, Mr. Speaker, they had all kinds of investigations about the museum.

MR. TULK:

And rightfully so!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, we did a magnificent

job upstairs. Only the other day the hon. the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) had a question on the Order Paper, "What did it cost to do the eleventh floor?" Mr. Speaker, I tabled what it cost over a year ago because hon. members on the other side were ripping the hide off government because we put in such elaborate facilities for the press, for the Premier to hold press conferences. Then along comes the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) and says, "Can we use it?" We gave them all kinds of permission, Mr. Speaker.

The Opposition has solutions for everything. The puppet for the press gallery, the hon. the member for Gander, I can assure that hon. member that when the renovations are made to this building, and when we unveil -

MR. TULK:

Are you jealous, Haig?

MR. YOUNG:

No. I do not want any press coverage. I can get elected as often as you, my son, without press coverage. I will never need press coverage.

MR. FLIGHT:

You will now Morrissey is back. Morrissey Johnson is back.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. YOUNG:

Myself and Morrissey Johnson get along just like two peas in a pod. Mr. Speaker, when we unveil the new House of Assembly, in a few days time, I will have a little press conference, I will invite the press - I am not bad friends with the press - and we will have a little few liqueurs

and things like that.

MR. FLIGHT:

Are you not going to invite the Opposition?

MR. YOUNG:

Why? Sure you are against everything! You were against the press gallery upstairs. We will invite you. We will invite you.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You are going to try to buy them with booze, are you?

MR. YOUNG:

I will buy it out of my own pocket, out of a bit of embalming money. Mr. Speaker, there will be no cost to government when I invite the press gallery down.

Mr. Speaker, they are arguing about the press gallery and so forth -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. YOUNG:

- but not long ago a Special Committee of the House was formed to bring in recommendations on Member Services, Accommodations and Benefits, and I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if they will ask questions about the estimated cost to provide facilities for the Opposition? Mr. Speaker, since I have been in the House, twelve or fifteen years, this is the second largest Opposition we have had. I have been here a long time. Not one of them was here when I came, not one on that side, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BAIRD:

One who was here, was thrown out, and came back again.

MR. YOUNG:

Oh, yes, the repeater.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the repeater - he comes back every second election - the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight).

MR. BAIRD:

It is time for a change, 'Haig'.

MR. YOUNG:

He is challenging me and telling me I am a landslide. Look, I have can landslide him. I will be around here for a long time, Mr. Speaker. I must say, and it was probably because of the puppet, the mascot, whatever he is for the press gallery, that I understand the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) has received a letter from the President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Press Gallery requesting space.

MR. TULK:

Yes, we got that letter.

MR. YOUNG:

Yes, they sent it to a Mr. Tulk. Now, Mr. Tulk has as much to do with the press gallery getting facilities, Mr. Speaker, as he has to do with digging one of my graves, and that is nothing. He is a washout.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, he is digging his own grave. The Opposition have be digging their own grave, in the last few days. I have all kinds of good close relations with the press gallery, Mr. Speaker, and in a few days time the press gallery will be satisfied. But I ask them to put up with a few little inconveniences, for which I apologize, and when we get it all

renovated in a few years time, Mr. Speaker, the galleries will be flowing.

MR. TULK:

The galleries will be flowing with wine.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, we did some renovations to the eighth floor in 1972, and we put the cream on top the other day. We will do the same thing, Mr. Speaker, for the press gallery in a year or so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

That is the best speech the member ever made..

MR. YOUNG:

This member can make a speech anytime at all, and get elected much more often than you can.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

The member for Windsor - Buchans is not satisfied with the answer he received from the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications about Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro's new rate structure.

The hon. member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

I already got the headline, boy. I already got the scrum today. I do not need a big press room to get a scrum. I got the scrum today.

MR. TULK:

What is this on, the Auditor General or what? What is this question on?

MR. SIMMS:

Give some of Rex's quotes now and get a headline.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, would you repeat the question again?

MR. SIMMS:

Did you have a question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAIRD:

If you do not know the question yet, sit down.

MR. TULK:

He has so many questions!

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, that is such a hard act to follow I have lost all track of any thoughts I had put together. But it has occurred to me, Mr. Speaker. I do not need your help, although I am sure you would give it to me.

I rose yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and asked the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications (Mr. Russell)-

MR. RUSSELL:

A question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

- what he was going to do to protect the consumers against the ravages of the increases that Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro is about to perpetrate on the people of this Province? Now, Mr.

Speaker, I had intended to ask questions about Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, but in midstream I said, My God, I cannot believe what I am hearing here, the people in Newfoundland think they have a Minister of Consumer Affairs who is here to protect their interests.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

That is right. What a mistake!

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, if ever there was a case in this House of Assembly where a minister should have taken a question under advisement, there was the place, because the minister stood up and basically what he said was, I do not understand what is happening to Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, I do not understand what is happening to consumer electrical rates, I do not understand and I do not care and, no, I am not going to protect them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

Hansard will show that I asked the minister, 'If Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro makes a windfall profit, will you attempt to see that that profit is returned to the consumers by way of a reduction in rates? The minister stood up and with a one word answer said, "No". Now, how can the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications (Mr. Russell) expect the people of this Province to have any faith in the minister who has been appointed to protect their interests in this Province?

MR. REID:

You cannot handle that kind of politician.

MR. FLIGHT:

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister for Trinity - Bay de Verde should get back in his own seat.

MR. SIMMS:

The minister for Trinity - Bay de Verde?

MR. FLIGHT:

The member. He did have a title, I understand, at one time. My hon. House Leader tells me that he had the title, "Old Conflict Of Interest". He has lost that title, it has been conferred on the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall). The member should sit there and not burp.

MR. SIMMS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans is really only attempting to get further headlines. After the press asked him to come out and do an interview, he came back in here with a big grin, from ear to ear. He figures he got the headline. Well, he got five minutes in the Late Show. He did not even know what the question was to begin with, now he is wasting his five minutes by talking about the member for Trinity - Bay de Verde. What has that got to do with his question, Mr. Speaker? I think he should be ruled out of order and ruled irrelevant,

totally irrelevant.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the member for Grand Falls -

MR. SIMMS:

Is this to the point of order?

MR. FLIGHT:

No, the Speaker ruled there was no point of order. Did you not hear the Speaker rule there was no point of order?

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the member for Grand Falls that when I get ridiculed in my district the way that I know he has been ridiculed in his district the last six months, then I will stand up in this House of Assembly and raise points of order. But until I get ridiculed and laughed at and made fun at in Windsor the way he has been in Grand Falls, then he should keep quiet and keep his seat. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is an abuse -

MR. SIMMS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

If ever there was a member laughed at not only in his district but in this Province, it is the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans, for the way he acts in this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, the member for Grand Falls is still smarting. In Grand Falls they call him "Old Landslide Simms" - forty-one votes and it took the university to deliver those. It took 130 kids, who do not know what is what in Grand Falls, to deliver that victory. He could not make it in Grand Falls.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, to the point of order.

Is the hon. member going to be relevant to his question? He is totally out of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

I have already ruled there is no point of order.

MR. FLIGHT:

The minister started it, Mr. Speaker.

I realize my time is just about up, Mr. Speaker. The member for Grand Falls has deliberately abused my rights in this House and used up my time. I want to ask the Minister of Consumer Affairs will he do what he was elected and appointed to do, and that is protect the consumers of this Province against the devious, backdoor way that Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro have tried to put it to them on electricity rates? Will he see to it that the interests of widows, the financially disadvantaged, the thousands of people on welfare in this Province will be protected and Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro will not be permitted to ravage them any further, will not be permitted to finance their

operations on the backs of the people whom he was appointed to protect? I do want a 'no' answer, I want to hear the minister.

MR. YOUNG:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

The Standing Orders say that the hon. member has five minutes. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has been speaking seven minutes and that is seven minutes too long in this House of Assembly.

MR. TULK:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. TULK:

The hon. gentleman should sit in his seat and listen.

MR. WINDSOR:

There is no point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TULK:

He got up on a point of order. He stood right beside you. That is stupid!

MR. WINDSOR:

The Speaker just ruled there was no point of order.

MR. TULK:

The hon. gentleman should sit in his seat and listen. Your Honour had ruled that the time had expired.

MR. YOUNG:

No, he did not. The man was still going on.

MR. TULK:

Do not be so silly.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

To that point of order, the hon. member was just completing five minutes so there is no point of order. His time is up now.

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, if the issue of the high cost of electrical rates was not so important, I could sort of chuckle at the remarks made by the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight). I suspect he has not gone to Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro to ask them to explain to him about the hearings they recently held and how the new formula and the new system works. He is relying on the media and his buddy, Rex, and anybody else, and makes statements that he cannot substantiate.

Everybody in this Province, Mr. Speaker, is aware that nobody, including the member for Windsor - Buchans, has any control over the rainfall and thus, the water levels, in this Province. Certainly, there has to be some degree of trust in the officials of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro that they are acting and will act in a very responsible manner. Certainly, they have to order the oil that they need weeks and months ahead of time, and when the member talks about the world

prices for oil, again, it is something, of course, over which this House of Assembly and this Province has no control. I really think that the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans has no faith and no trust, no confidence in the officials of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. He mentioned, Mr. Speaker, that the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro people were gouging the public. I suspect that he does not have any evidence to back up that remark.

MR. FLIGHT:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

On a point of order, the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

I can tell the minister that I did not accuse Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro of gouging. I asked the minister if he would protect the consumers against any possible gouging by Newfoundland Hydro and the minister said no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! There is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, that is not what I said.

The comment that the member for Windsor - Buchans made yesterday in his question was, 'Any windfall profits made by Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, in the cases and under the circumstances outlined, will be returned to the Newfoundland consumer by way of

reduced rates. Now can the minister guarantee that to the consumers in this Province?' And I said I could not guarantee that to the consumers in this Province.

MR. FLIGHT:

You said no.

MR. RUSSELL:

No, I cannot guarantee that it will be returned to the consumers of this Province.

MR. TULK:

You said no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. RUSSELL:

The hon. the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) and the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) use words to suit themselves and they could not care less about the consumers of this Province, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please! Order, please!

It is now six o'clock and it has been moved and seconded that the House do now adjourn.

MR. MARSHALL:

If I could, just before we adjourn, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I would like to advise the Opposition as to the order of business. After the Department of

Finance bill tomorrow, if it does end, we will go on to Order 33, the Liquor Corporation Act, then the Financial Corporations Capital Tax Act, Bill No. 37, then we will do Order 35, and then we will come back, Mr. Speaker, to the Youth Advisory bill, Order 10, and we will proceed down the Order Paper and do all of the bills that are on the Order Paper which were in the press statement of September 24th and which are now -

MR. FLIGHT:

Do the Accord, boy! Do the Accord.

MR. MARSHALL:

Does the hon. gentleman want the information or does he want to continue to bray like a jackass?

Then we will go down the ones that are there. Now, I do want to say, though, before we resume debate tomorrow we will put the bills we have in Committee of the Whole through Committee first.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, November 29, 1985 at 10:00 a.m.

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Answers to Questions

tabled

November 28, 1985

PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST
DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

Mr. William Norman was hired as a Public Relations Specialist in an established permanent position in the Minister's Office Department of Municipal Affairs, on a temporary basis, with effect from January 25, 1985. This action was taken in accordance with established Government policy, which provides for the employment of temporary staff in non-management positions for periods not exceeding twelve months, without reference to the Public Service Commission. Mr. Norman is presently paid a salary of \$22,224.00 on a position salary scale \$22,224.00 to \$25,191.00. Because of the complexity of the Department in dealing with over 300 municipalities throughout the Province, and in particular, the fact that 1985 is a year for general municipal elections for Town Councils, it was considered essential to hire a Public Relations Officer.

William Norman has graduated from Memorial University of Newfoundland with a Bachelor of Education Degree, together with a Bachelor of Arts in History. Mr. Norman has also completed a course in Effective Speaking and Human Relations. His educational qualifications, together with his work experience in various fields were determining factors when he was hired in this position.

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Answers to Questions

tabled

November 27, 1985

Reply to Question #19 dated November 13, 1985, from the M.H.A. for Menihek.

QUESTION: Last spring the Minister indicated that there was a temporary program to replant a bunch of seedlings that had been damaged in the Spring. I would ask the Minister to give us:

- (1) A complete list of those individuals who were hired on for that temporary program, and the duration for which they were hired on, and the salaries paid.

ANSWER: The Minister of Forest Resources & Lands did not indicate at any time last spring that there was a temporary program to replant damaged seedlings.

QUESTION NO: 20

ORDER PAPER: 57 - NOVEMBER 13, 1985

QUESTION FROM: M.H.A. FOR DISTRICT OF MENIHEK

QUESTION

TO ASK THE HONOURABLE THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS TO LAY UPON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- (1) IN HIS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, COULD HE GIVE US A LIST OF ALL THE TEMPORARY POSITIONS WITHIN THE GENERAL PUBLIC SERVICE, AND THE NAMES OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHO OCCUPY THOSE POSITIONS.
- (2) PLEASE GIVE AN INDICATION WHETHER OR NOT
 - (a) THEY HAVE BEEN ADVERTISED
 - (b) WHETHER THERE WAS ANY COMPETITION FOR THE JOBS THEMSELVES.

ANSWER

THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FILLING OF TEMPORARY POSITIONS WITHIN GOVERNMENT. THIS RESPONSIBILITY RESTS WITH INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTS, AND EACH ONE ASSUMES ITS OWN RESPONSIBILITY AND MAINTAINS ITS OWN LISTING. DUE TO THE NATURE OF THESE JOBS WHICH ARE RELATIVELY SHORT-TERM, FOR THE MOST PART, THE PROVISIONS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION ACT DO NOT APPLY AND, THEREFORE, PUBLIC ADVERTISING IS NOT REQUIRED.

Tabled by the Honourable The
Minister of Public Works and
Services November 1985

QUESTION NO. 12

ORDER PAPER - 49/85

QUESTION FROM - M.H.A. DISTRICT OF ST. BARBE

QUESTION (1)

HAS THE OFFICE OF THE HONOURABLE THE MINISTER OF
JUSTICE BEEN RENOVATED RECENTLY?

ANSWER

YES, THE MINISTER'S OFFICE HAS BEEN RENOVATED
RECENTLY.

QUESTION (2)

A SPECIFIC BREAKDOWN OF COSTS FOR THESE RENOVATIONS

ANSWER

THE FOLLOWING ESTIMATED COSTS WERE INCURRED IN
RENOVATING THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

<u>WORK</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COST</u>
WALL COVERING	\$ 1,420.00
CARPET	1,478.43
ELECTRICAL	452.07
INTERIOR DESIGN	317.49
DRAPES	613.00
LABOUR, TIME & MATERIALS	<u>166.66</u>
TOTAL COST	<u><u>4,447.65</u></u>

QUESTION 3

WILL THE HONOURABLE THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE
BE MOVING TO NEW OFFICES IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

ANSWER

NO, THE MINISTER WILL NOT BE MOVING IN THE
NEAR FUTURE.

QUESTION (1)

IF SO, WHEN?

ANSWER

NOT APPLICABLE SINCE THE MINISTER IS NOT MOVING.