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Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

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The House met at 10:00 a.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

I would just like to inform the House that the Editor of Hansard has mentioned to me that he has had a number of requests for transcripts from the Estimates Committees. He is not able to provide that service at this time because of shortage of staff. Normally these transcripts are not available until the House has finished. If we are to turn out Hansard and other matters, we will have to put that in abeyance. There are not enough staff to have these things available the next day or the day after. I think in very exceptional circumstance he would probably be able to get the odd extract from them.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege. I rise on a very serious matter and it has to do with what I believe is about to happen in the Estimates Committee. I rise on this knowing full well that the Speaker has ruled on a number of occasions that Committees are masters of their own fate, yet I believe we are heading into a situation in the Estimates Committees where something has to be done or the Estimates Committees are in jeopardy of falling apart.

It has become apparent to those of us in the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, and I say this in a very serious vein, that there is a deliberate attempt to obstruct the workings

of the Committees, and there is a deliberate attempt to stop Opposition members from asking questions.

The latest example, I am told by our members who sat on the Committee last night, was in the -

MR. PATTERSON:
They wasted all night asking foolish questions.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. TULK:
There is the kind of thing I am talking about, the perfect example.

Last night, I am told, the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan), the member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin), along with the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach), arrived at the Social Services Committee some time between 9:30 and 9:45, and for the rest of the night there was nothing but spurious points of order, unreasonable demands made on the Chairman, that those people asked no pertinent questions, that they were there purely, it seemed, just to obstruct Opposition members, and to try to tell Opposition members what kind of questions they should or should not ask.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Hansard will show whether I am right or wrong, if what I am saying is true. There is a written record of everything that goes on in those Committees. While the Hansard people may have some trouble digging out this kind of thing, perhaps it would be worthwhile taking a look at. Mr. Speaker, I say to you that that kind of behaviour, as I said at the beginning, is most unfortunate, and we on the Opposition are

saying that if it continues, the committees cannot work.

As I understand it, our people were asking some very pertinent questions last night about the purchasing services of one of the departments and they were continually interrupted. It has reached the point, Mr. Speaker, where it is degenerating into chaos, name calling, mudslinging and pure obstruction. I had a prime example of it myself one night when I sat on the Social Services Committee and we were told by the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) in no uncertain terms that when the member for Port de Grave arrived, he was going to give him his comeupance, he was going to see that he apologized or else the committee would not work.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I want, in a very serious vein, to ask members on the other side to be quiet and listen to what I am saying, because we do not intend, if this kind of thing continues, to take part in that kind of mudslinging, that kind of name calling. We have made it quite known among ourselves that we will not be part of what I chose to call at this point a situation that has reached the very sick scenario that is going on in those Estimates Committees. It has to stop, because it is becoming extremely difficult to do the work of the Estimates Committees. In many cases, Mr. Speaker, I might point out to you, and I am not saying that it is the fault of the Chairmen necessarily, but in many cases the Chairmen of those committees are practically losing

control of the committees, control of the committees is practically nonexistent.

Mr. Speaker, I say this to you, and I would ask you to look at all the records that exist, all the precedents that exist in the House of Commons and other places, that if the Speaker cannot find a prima facie case, I would ask him to see if there is some other method whereby the committees at least can be controlled to the point where there is sensible behaviour, where there are questions being asked that are very pertinent to the minister, questions that are being asked that need to be answered for the taxpayers of this Province. For example, I am told that there were a number of questions asked last night concerning how much the minister spends on entertainment, which is very pertinent and he may have a legitimate answer, but if you are going to be continually interrupted, then I suggest that nobody is being served.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude my remarks on this point of privilege by emphasizing again that members are being impeded in the committees, and I think quite deliberately, and something has to be done either by government itself taking control of its members, or by the House, otherwise, we will have no Estimates Committees.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

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

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, just a few remarks. First of all, there is no deliberate attempt to obstruct. The only attempt by the government is to try to make the committee

system work effectively. The hon. gentleman should know the rules. The fact that members from the government side were interested enough to come in last night to a committee meeting shows how conscientious they are with respect to their duties in the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL:
The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. MARSHALL:
Do hon. gentlemen want to hear? They talk about obstructing, and you hear the chippy little member on the hon. gentleman's left going on in his usual way. You wanted silence.

Mr. Speaker, the committees are set up in such a way that there are seven members. Any member can go and partake in the proceedings, but only seven can vote. The committees are masters of their own rules. If the hon. gentlemen want to threaten that they will not attend the committees, then that is fine. If the hon. gentlemen do not attend, the committees will continue without them and the committee examination will be more effective than hon. gentlemen were able to achieve when the main estimates were considered in this House, Mr. Speaker, in Committee of the Whole, and hon. gentlemen there opposite spent 85 per cent of their allotted time on an interim supply measure that had already been approved and was already executed, and they were not interested in enquiring into the

data.

Mr. Speaker, these committees are working and they are working well. They are the same types of committees that are used in every other legislature and parliament in the British Parliamentary system, and they are much more effective because they allow a much more detailed examination of the estimates than in Committee of the Whole.

I say to hon. gentlemen, first of all, that the committees are masters of their own rules. It is not, Mr. Speaker, a matter to bring into this House, complaints about the operations of the committees. Hon. gentlemen regard the House of Assembly as a classroom. They come in and they look at the Speaker as if the Speaker is the teacher and you have to come in and report. That is not the way in which it operates, and this is an effective process. I am happy, as I say, that members on the government side were interested enough to go in, even when they were not on that committee last night, and enquire, it just goes to show how effective government is.

I have no other comments but, Mr. Speaker, but some of the members who were accused by the hon. gentleman, who were present last night and formed the burden of his complaint, may want to add a few words to it. But I will tell the hon. gentleman that the Committees will continue. If the Opposition want to boycott them, if they are not there, they will be as effective as if they all attended.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. DECKER:

To that point of privilege, Mr. Speaker. At no time has the Liberal Party said we will boycott. We will not boycott those committees as long as they are functioning. It is our right but, furthermore, Mr. Speaker, it is our obligation to attend, and that is what we are going to do. We take this responsibility very, very seriously. We attend those committees with prepared questions, Mr. Speaker, because it is an opportunity for the people of this Province to scrutinize the way billions of dollars are being spent. We go prepared for those meetings.

Now, I have seen this so-called goon squad in action, Mr. Speaker. I have been at three committee meetings where they have come to disrupt, and there is no doubt in my mind that they disrupting.

MR. MARSHALL:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

We are on a point of privilege.

MR. MARSHALL:

Oh, I thought he was responding to it.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that they are making a farce of the process which, as the hon. member pointed out, may be a good thing. I say the committees may or may not be a good thing, but if they are going to be

continually disrupted, they are becoming a farce.

Last night the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan), the member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) and the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) came to the committee and they were drunk.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, Mr. Speaker!

MR. DECKER:

Listen to me. Hear me out. They were drunk with their zeal.

MR. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of personal privilege.

MR. DECKER:

I am on a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

We are on a point of privilege at the moment.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that they were drunk with alcohol.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I think what the hon. member said is completely out of order and I would ask him to withdraw it.

MR. DECKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will withdraw the word 'drunk'. They were overly zealous. They were intoxicated with zeal, Mr. Speaker. This is what happened last night. They were so intoxicated with their zeal, Mr. Speaker, that it was funny for the people who were present but it was not funny for the people of Newfoundland. We are there

representing them, to scrutinize the spending of millions of dollars, and it is our right, it is our obligation. If these committees, Mr. Speaker, are not given more supervision, then they are going to degenerate into a farce and they will work to the benefit of the government, who do not want their actions to be scrutinized. It is for their benefit they will work, Mr. Speaker. I am extremely disappointed that this is happening to the spending of millions of dollars in this Province, and the people of Newfoundland deserve to know about it.

MR. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the member for Bonavista South.

MR. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, I have not taken part in the committees dealing with the estimates for the last ten years. I was unable to do so, being a minister of the government. But I have been enjoying very much sitting down and asking questions of the various ministers on various programmes and policies and projects for which each department is now putting forward their estimates of expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, it is a very serious matter if the Opposition is trying to question my right as a private member of this House, that because I happen to be on the government side, because I happen to support the administration I cannot sit in on meetings of committees of the House, which are an extension of the House of Assembly, and ask questions, and that I cannot take exception to the kinds of things I

have seen done in the last two or three days by the Opposition. Yesterday, for example, during the Energy estimates, the members of the Opposition spent a full hour and a half on one topic, a personal attack on two men, Mr. Cabot Martin and Mr. Peter Loughheed. Three members of the Opposition zeroed in to attack two individuals. Is that the way the Opposition wants to operate?

Mr. Speaker, with the exception of CBC, I think the media coverage, for example, The Evening Telegram, adequately portrays what takes place in these meetings. It shows that members from the government side ask intelligent questions.

The objective of the members on this side all along, Mr. Speaker, has been to extract from government for the people of Newfoundland information as to what this administration is doing for various areas; not to come in and listen, for example, as in the case of RAND, Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development, when all we heard from the Opposition was innuendo and accusation to the effect that rural development loans were being made for political patronage. It was abuse! There was no foundation to that, Mr. Speaker, and we brought it to light. What we were doing was asking questions and debating the programmes and policies to make sure that people get the information through the media, with the exception of CBC, who, for some reason, and I say this very seriously, refuse to give information to the public of Newfoundland as to what this administration is all about and what it is doing.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Why is that?

MR. MORGAN:

Why? We will find out why later on.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, I think it is a very serious matter when members of the Opposition try, through a ruling made by a member of the Opposition who was in the Chair at the time, to muzzle my colleague from Torngat Mountain (Mr. Warren) by saying no, you cannot ask questions. That was done two days ago.

It is quite clear to me, Mr. Speaker, that all this is about one thing, the fact that the Opposition has been very ineffective as an Opposition in scrutinizing the estimates. And what is happening is a number of us from the government side have been performing the role of Opposition in scrutinizing this administration's estimates, because the Opposition is not doing its job.

Mr. Speaker, I take strong exception to one comment made. We as members who are serving on a number of Committees, took the time last evening to go down and sit in on the estimates of a department that is important to my district, in this case the Department of Culture Recreation and Youth. The minister, by the way, is coming to Bonavista with me on Tuesday to look at matters out there. We sat in on that Committee last night and because we arrived a bit late -

MR. FLIGHT:

9:30.

MR. MORGAN:

It still shows that we were interested, to come after hours

last night when we were not even serving on the Committee, to take part in discussing an important department. And then to hear the kind of personal attack, the dirt, trying to leave the impression that we came in drunk. The fact is, in making these kinds of remarks, the hon. gentleman is only hurting himself.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! I wonder if the hon. member would keep his remarks to the point of privilege?

MR. MORGAN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will. I am trying to conclude my remarks on this point. There is no point of privilege unless the Chair rules that we as private members, members of this side of the House, cannot take part in these committees in any way we see fit, cannot take part in the debate in this House any way we see fit. Unless a ruling of that nature comes from a Committee or from the Chair, as was done a few days ago, there is no point of privilege at all and we intend to carry on doing our duty, scrutinizing government estimates, to get information out to the public through certain media, again excluding CBC.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I have heard a good cross-section of the views from both sides. I have heard two from each side, and I am prepared to rule on this matter now. As I ruled yesterday and the day before, the Committees are masters of their own rules and it is not for me to rule on this matter. There is no prime facie

case.

Now I will consider the comments made by the hon. member for Fogo. At the moment, I do not think it would be right or proper for me to comment any further on the matter, but I will certainly look into the matter and, if I think it is right and proper, I am quite prepared to comment further.

MR. TOBIN:

On a point of personal privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

On a point of privilege, the hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to take exception to a personal attack that was just issued on myself, my colleague for Carbonear and my colleague for Bonavista South. Mr. Speaker, we have responsibilities as elected members of this House to ensure that information gets out to the public. The type of remark, Mr. Speaker, that was made this morning by the member for the Strait of Belle Isle is absolutely ridiculous. A person cannot say indirectly what he will not say directly. What the member said about us being drunk with enthusiasm was not the impression -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member withdrew these comments.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, he certainly did. I think he should also have to withdraw the words 'goon squad'. My point, Mr. Speaker, is that the Opposition have set

out deliberately this morning to personally attack individuals. The type of conduct prevailing at these committee meetings for the past two weeks, was illustrated here this morning by the member for the Strait of Belle Isle. As a member of this House, Mr. Speaker, I believe I have the right to be protected from that type of disease.

Now the fact of the matter has been that yesterday morning we came here and we heard, Mr. Speaker, members opposite attack individuals who were not in this House to defend themselves and who are doing a good job for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. We have heard, Mr. Speaker, and we have exposed the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford). He comes in here and, under the protection of this House, makes all kinds of false statements and accusations relating to group homes, and causes all kinds of concern for people in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of this House, I believe I have a right to expose that type of garbage, that type of falsehood, coming from the member for Port de Grave.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I would like the hon. member to get to his point of privilege.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, my point of privilege is this: As a member of this House, I have rights and I have responsibilities. One of my responsibilities is to question government as to how their money is being spent and I think we have been doing that. I remember the night myself and the member for

St. John's East (Mr. Marshall), and other colleagues, sat on a committee and were referred to by the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) as the goon squad, which was carried by his friends at CBC. I remember that, Mr. Speaker. I do not think that they should be permitted to get away with that, and I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to give us the type of protection that we as members need to carry out the duties and responsibilities, which we have been elected to do.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, me thinks the member doth protest too much, first of all. But let me say to him quite sincerely that the idea that we on this side want to engage in a personal attack is not true. The Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett), the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout), the Minister of Health (Dr. Twomey), the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power), everyone of them, when they sit in that Chair they are not sitting there in a personal sense, they are sitting there as ministers of the Crown; they have to answer certain questions and whatever questions are put to them, they should try to answer them to the best of their ability.

Now, let me say what the fuss was about in regard to the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford). The member asked questions on group homes. Do you know what the question was, Mr. Speaker? He asked the minister, as I understand it, for the

qualifications of the people who were involved in the process, the minister did not know the answer and the people -

MR. MORGAN:

He attacked individuals working in groups homes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

You see, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure hon. members that a personal attack is not there. He mentioned my using the phrase 'the goon squad'. As a matter of fact, when I was interviewed by CBC I said, 'I do not want to attack either member of the House as a thug.' But I will certainly say this this morning, Mr. Speaker, that they are behaving like parliamentary thugs in that they are trying to obstruct the process, and that is the sense in which you call them a goon squad. And they are deliberately, I have to say to Your Honour, they are deliberately doing it. Whether it is, as my friend from the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker) said - I think he used the phrase 'intoxicated with their own zeal', or whatever. With regard to the words 'drunk with zeal', the hon. member, when the Speaker asked him, withdrew them, as he should do. He was gentleman enough to do it. I suggest that that may not be the case with members on the other side.

Mr. Speaker, there is no case of privilege from the other side. We are not trying to stop the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) asking questions, but we would ask him that when a member is speaking to stop continually, as he does, interjecting, trying to throw

members off, trying to get the attention of the press. He is a master at it, there is no doubt about that. He does not have to prove that to anybody, he is a master at getting the attention of the press. But we would ask him to wait his turn and, as the Chairman tells him he can speak, to ask his question and then allow members of the Opposition to do the same thing. That is the only thing, Mr. Speaker, that is involved here.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

To that point of order, I have heard comments from both sides. There is no prima facie case of breach of privilege.

MR. MORGAN:
Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege again.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. member for Bonavista South.

MR. MORGAN:
I cannot sit in this House and carry out my role as a member with the implication left hanging that I am some kind of a goon. The description of a goon is someone who would be almost a gangster-type, hired by someone to do illegal things. Mr. Speaker, my only employer at the present time are thousands of people in Bonavista South who sent me here as their member. They are my employer. They are the only ones I report to at the present time, the same as my friends from Carbonear (Mr. Peach), Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) and elsewhere. We report to our constituents, and for a member of this House to refer to me as a goon reflects quite badly on the

people who sent me here. They did not send me here as a goon, they sent me here as their member, to do a job for them and the district I represent. And I take strong exception to being called a 'goon.' The only media to carry that kind of trash was CBC. They love that kind of stuff. It was a headline one morning. There was not a word carried on that same report, Mr. Speaker, about what took place at the meeting, what information came from the minister, the headline was 'Opposition says the goons came out to attack.' That is the kind of stuff CBC loves these days.

MR. PEACH:
They may get another award for that.

MR. MORGAN:
Yes, they may get another award for it.

And this kind of thing this morning, you mark my words, Mr. Speaker and colleagues on this side, CBC will love to carry this bit this morning about being called goons again. That is the reason why I stand on a point of personal privilege. I am not a goon, none of my colleagues are goons. We came here to do a job for the people we represent in our respective districts. I stand by that quite firmly, Mr. Speaker. We are getting down to a very sad situation when all of us as peers, irrespective of party, sit here as leaders of the people whom we represent, all of Newfoundland, and we have to call each other goons in this House. That, Mr. Speaker, is getting pretty low and is really taking away from the honour we have as representatives of the people of Newfoundland in this House. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that the terminology used

to describe members on this side as 'goons' be withdrawn and an apology put forward accordingly.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Just one brief comment, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

The real problem that the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) has this morning is that he knows full well the kind of behaviour that he has carried on with in those committees is wrong. That is his real problem, that is what is striking home to him. If the member wants me to again say that I did not call him a thug in the sense of being a gangster I will say that, but I will also say to him that his behaviour and his actions were that of a parliamentary thug, in getting in the House and trying to obstruct and trying to take on one member to destroy him. Talk about personal attacks! We have seen the hon. gentleman use the committee system to have a go at Richard Cashin, and that is his right if he wants to -

MR. MORGAN:

I would say it outside the House, as well.

MR. TULK:

Well, I used the phrase outside the House as well.

We have seen him walk into a committee and say, 'As soon as the member for Port de Grave arrives, I am going to put him down.' The member knows that that kind of behavior on his part is wrong. That is his real problem. That is what is hitting home.

I say to him, it is a sad situation that has developed in those committees. It is a sad situation, especially when we see the behavior of people like the member for Bonavista South. I respect the people of Bonavista South for having the right to send the hon. gentleman here. And that is the reason I would not call him a thug, that is the reason I would not call him a gangster, because they have that right.

MR. MORGAN:

Maybe I will run in Fogo next time.

MR. TULK:

So do. The people of Fogo will send somebody to this Legislature. It may or may not be me or you, but the people of Fogo will carry out their choice. They will send their person here, whoever it is. So do not threaten. That is another example, threats from the hon. gentleman. That is the kind of stuff we are seeing in those committees and that is the kind of stuff, Mr. Speaker, that is going to lead to the downfall of those committees. If they are going to work, this House, the Premier, the Government House Leader and everybody else has a responsibility to see that they do. Enough is enough!

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

The hon. gentleman is not going to be allowed to obscure the point of privilege brought up by the member for Bonavista South. We cannot do, unfortunately, anything about CBC, but we can do something about

members in this House - not in committees - who get up in this House and refer to another member or group of members as 'goons' or 'goon' and that is what is before Your Honour now and that is what demands a retraction and an apology by the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I will just hear one more comment from the hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what I am hearing here this morning from members opposite, and with straight faces. It makes me ashamed to even sit here. As an example, Mr. Speaker, in the Committee meeting yesterday having to do with Energy, I tried to question a budgeted expenditure of \$20,000 that blossomed into \$320,000 in actual expenditure and I did not get ten words out of my mouth before the member for Bonavista South was up on two points of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

We are on a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is not speaking to the point of privilege.

MR. BAKER:

I am getting around to that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I would ask the hon. member to speak strictly to the point of privilege.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I am getting around to it. I wanted to mention that example to you, Mr. Speaker, to point out that if his behavior is such that he would force me to take forty-five minutes of Committee time to get one simple piece of information from the Minister of Energy - and that is what he did in that Committee and Your Honour can check to see - that is action similar to a goon squad, a squad that was sent out to deliberately prevent proper things from happening in the Committees.

I would ask the Speaker to look into this behavior and see if it is not similar to the planned actions of a squad sent in to disrupt.

MR. SPEAKER:

I have heard enough on this point of privilege to rule at the moment. There are certain words and comments that are unparliamentary. I will check into Hansard and see what comments were made and, if necessary, I will have more to say about that on Monday. Unparliamentary remarks like that do not affect the privileges of an hon. member but they should be withdrawn. There is no prima facie case of breach of privilege.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

A point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

A point of privilege, the hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I want to pursue this matter. The hon. members opposite, and I am not referring now to what happened in the committee meetings. The committee

is supposed to be superior in how it deals with itself. That has been ruled upon a number of times and, therefore, that is a matter for the committee to deal with. However, when an hon. member, as they have done today in this House, calls another hon. member, or members, goons, I refer Your Honour, and I ask Your Honour to take it under advisement, to Page 104 of Beauchesne, referring to members in debate: "In the House of Commons a member will not be permitted by the Speaker to indulge in any reflections on the House itself as a political institution; or to impute to any member or members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case."

Mr. Speaker, what has happened in the committees and here again today is that hon. members opposite have used the term 'goon'. The meaning for goon is quite clear, and the hon. Speaker can look it up. They are casting motives on the character and integrity of members of this House, whether they be on this side, or the other side, or whatever, and that cannot be allowed to continue if this House is to have any dignity and is to operate like a Parliament should.

I ask Your Honour to take this point of privilege under consideration because it is clear that using words like 'goon' does impute motives to other hon. members of this House. It is a serious breach of the personal privileges of members of this House of Assembly.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo, to the point of privilege.

MR. TULK:

Let me say to the hon. Premier that, first of all, there is no point of privilege because Your Honour has already made his point; he is going to look at Hansard and see if there is something that needs to be withdrawn. But let me say to the hon. gentleman opposite, in as equally a serious tone as he makes his point, that of course he is right. If there is something said about the character of an individual, it should be withdrawn. But let me also make this point to him, that it is also equally as serious to impede members in the performance of their duties and I would suggest to him that as the First Minister in this Province, as the person primarily responsible for the running of government in this Province, as the person who introduced the Estimate Committees in this House and said that they would work, he take a serious look at the actions of some of his members as they relate to their actions in those committees. And do you know something? I cannot believe, I will not believe that the hon. gentleman is condoning that kind of thing. I do not believe that, because I think he has a little bit too much respect for the parliamentary process. I think the hon. gentleman, the Premier, has too much respect for this institution and I would ask him again, as the first minister, I would ask the hon. gentleman very seriously to take a look at the actions of some of the members in that Committee to see if, indeed, we are not being impeded in asking the kinds of questions that need to be asked?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, if I can have just thirty seconds on the point of privilege?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

My point of privilege is twofold, one, the use of the word 'goon' in referring to another hon. member of this House, which I think is imputing bad motives against another member of the House and, two, the statement was also made, and I would like Your Honour to consider this, which is also imputing motives, that I, as the Premier of this Province, have instructed members of my caucus to obstruct the workings of the Committees of the House.

MR. TULK:

Who said that?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Hon. members opposite have.

MR. TULK:

No, we have not.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes, you have. You said it, it has been on radio, and it was said here again this morning, that the Premier has done that. That has been said. That again is imputing the motives of a member of this House, namely, yours truly.

MR. TOBIN:

The press carried it. CBC carried it.

MR. FLIGHT:

We know you are not encouraging that.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

You have said it.

MR. SPEAKER:

I will hear one further comment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

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

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of privilege. I will be only too happy to withdraw the word 'goon' when the Speaker instructs me to do so or when the squad is called off, whichever comes first.

MR. MATTHEWS:

You are the real goon.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Now, we have it, 'when the squad is called off'. If the squad has to be called off, that presumes that the squad must have been called on. Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is imputing the motives of somebody on this side of the House. Who? Who is he implying put the squad, as he calls them, on? whatever on is supposed to mean.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just let me refer you to Webster's New World Dictionary. 'g-o-o-n': First of all (it is slang) - it is not proper language to start with - 'a ruffian or thug. One hired as a

strike breaker. A stupid person.'

One hired. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is extremely important if this House is going to function. If hon. members are allowed to get up in their place and use appellations like goon against another hon. member, then obviously anything goes in this House. There are rules and there are forms of speech that are permitted, and there are forms of speech and grammar and diction which are not allowed under the rules. This reinforces my whole point, Mr. Speaker, on the second part of my point of privilege. One, clearly the word 'goon' is unparliamentary, as Beauchesne indicates and as the definition demonstrates and, secondly, there is an allegation from hon. members opposite that I or members of the government have instructed members of the caucus to go and act as goons, and gangs and squads, as the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle just said, and obstruct the performance of the Estimates Committee meetings, and that imputes motives upon me and other members of the administration.

On those two points I would like your ruling, Your Honour.

MR. TULK:

One final comment, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

One final comment, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Your Honour, the Premier is making a needless point of privilege because Your Honour has already ruled that, indeed, he will take the matter under advisement and rule on it at some other point in time. Perhaps the Premier is trying, and I suppose the Premier

has to do this, gain back some respect for some of the members and their actions. I suppose he has to defend them, but I do not believe the Premier feels comfortable with that kind of thing. In regard to the allegation that the Premier instructed them, I think the hon. gentleman should remember the few words I spoke a few minutes ago when I said that I do not believe the Premier would instruct people to do that. I think he has too much respect for this institution. That is the only point I make, Your Honour.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

I have heard enough on this matter. The first point that the hon. the Premier made about a goon I feel I dealt with in the earlier point of privilege and, as I said, I will have more to say on that when I look into the matter. On the second point, I would like to consider that and, again, I will have more to say about it in this coming week.

Statements by Ministers

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I have already informed hon. members that because of the volatility of fuel prices in this Province, that the Department of Finance is carrying out surveys on a more frequent basis in order to determine the actual tax levy because our fuel tax arrangement is an ad valorem,

that is, a percentage-type thing.

I am pleased to announce that effective May 1, 1986, the tax on gasoline will be reduced by one cent per litre to 9.9 cents per litre, and the tax on diesel fuel will be reduced by 0.4 cents per litre to 13.3 cents per litre. These tax reductions are a direct result of declining prices of fuel at the retail level. The tax on gasoline is now at its lowest point since July 1, 1984.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, we, on this side, are delighted that we seem to be making some headway in convincing the government to take some action, as little as it is. This is an automatic thing but, still, we do not want to give the impression that we are not pleased to see any kind of action at all by the government that will result in reduced prices in gasoline and fuel to the consumers of this Province. We must welcome that but we must still say that we sincerely believe the consumers of this Province are still being exploited. They are still not getting the full benefits in proportion to the decline in world prices for oil. We will not be happy until we see that coming through in a more intensified manner, more in proportion to the declining rate. But we do welcome

the decline, as little as it is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a short verbal statement concerning the decision made yesterday by the Public Utilities Board in denying Newfoundland Light and Power a rate increase. Mr. Speaker, it was indeed an historical decision.

The members of the Opposition for the past number of weeks, months and indeed years, perhaps, have said that the Public Utilities Board is a rubber stamp for government. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the decision that they made yesterday dispels that. They are not a rubber stamp of government. The fact that we do have a consumer representative on the Public Utilities Board, I think, had more than a little influence on the decision made yesterday. The gentleman who wrote the report, Mr. Williams, I understand, and indeed all the members of the Public Utilities Board are to be commended for the decision they made yesterday. Hon. members will perhaps get up and say that it is the first time they have denied a request for some years, or the first time ever, perhaps, and that is indeed correct. It is also noteworthy, Mr. Speaker, to say that in the public hearings that took place, not one individual on the Opposition side had the interest or took the time to make an

intervention on behalf of the consumers of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

What! What!

MR. RUSSELL:

And here they are, Mr. Speaker, getting up every day saying that they are protectors of the consumer and not one of them had any interest to intervene as did somebody from government side who did intervene on behalf of the consumers.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am delighted indeed with the decision of the Public Utilities Board. I understand that it was a first and indeed we saw democracy in action yesterday.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, we on this side are delighted as well to see that that application for an increase was turned down. We congratulate Mr. Wells and we are glad to see that he is earning his \$25,000. We understand that this is the first time that an application has been rejected in twenty-five years. We hope that we do not have to wait another twenty-five years before the consumer is protect once again.

Mr. Speaker, when we see the world price of oil slashed by more than half and we see the minister stand in his place to take credit for the Public Utilities Board freezing this application increase, we just wonder what he

is actively doing to protect the ordinary citizen out there who goes to a gas pump, knowing that the world price of a barrel of crude has been slashed by more than half in this country for nearly three and a half to four months -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FUREY:

- so what we are saying, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FUREY:

- is that the consumer of the Province really is not being protected very well -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FUREY:

- when you consider -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I understand the statement made by the minister related to the decision of the Public Utilities Board and made no reference to what the hon. gentleman is now talking about, number one, and number two, in response to a ministerial statement, one is not allowed to enter into the realm of debate but has to keep strictly on the statement that is given. There

are other opportunities for the hon. gentleman to bring up what he is talking about.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

To that point of order, there is no point of order but I would remind the hon. member he has about half a minute left.

MR. FUREY:
Very quickly, Mr. Speaker, we are delighted on this side to see that that application was frozen. We watch with bated breath to see whether or not Newfoundland Light and Power will appeal this and we watch to see the performance of our consumer rep on that board and the minister himself. If Light and Power does appeal that process, we hope that they will stand strong and protect the consumer and, in fact, continue to protect the consumer in light of the fact that - and a price of a barrel of oil is related to this if you consider Hydro's costs, etc.

We on this side wonder why Hydro, for example, are not stockpiling at cheaper prices so that the consumer down the road will get a break on this cheaper fuel.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. FUREY:
So we congratulate Mr. Wells.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. FUREY:
It is good to see him earn his \$25,000, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. FUREY:
We look forward to him protecting the consumer in the future.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

I will name the hon. member if he does not sit down.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. SPEAKER:
On a point of privilege, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:
On a point of privilege, if we are going to have the rules of this House complied with, they have to be drawn to the attention of this House. Now, it is a very serious matter when Your Honour stands in this House. Any member who is speaking has to take his Chair immediately, otherwise there can be no order. Your Honour certainly should not have had to have gotten your feet but you were forced to your feet to draw the hon. gentleman to order and, instead of taking his seat, what the hon. gentleman did was persisted in talking. He should have sat down immediately, otherwise, we have no order in this House at all.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK:

The hon. gentleman is right, of course. When the Speaker stands, the member takes his seat.

MR. YOUNG:

Well, why did he not?

MR. TULK:

My friend may have been zealous. He was carried away. Perhaps he did not see the Speaker. I am sure that the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) has no desire to disobey and I think when he realized the Speaker was standing, he did sit down. Of course, we, on this side, will obey the rules of this House and the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

To that point of privilege, I would remind the hon. member for St. Barbe I did call order, and pretty loudly too on two separate occasions. He ignored my call and continued to -

MR. FUREY:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I have not finished.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Name him.

MR. SPEAKER:

It came to the stage that I had to say to the hon. member that I would name him if he did not sit down. So I would hope that this matter will not crop up again.

MR. FUREY:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, I apologize for not sitting down but I was facing the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Russell) and -

AN HON. MEMBER:

You were not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, listen to the jackasses and the jackals over there. How could I possibly hear the Speaker when those jackasses are making such noise.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please! Order, please!

This matter has been dealt with now.

At this stage I would like to welcome to the visitor's gallery thirty-five Grades X, XI and XII students from Eugene Vaters Collegiate, St. John's, with their teachers, Rick Canning and Cyril Wellman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn), would the Premier inform the House of the names of the sixteen School Tax Authorities that have had no legal

existence in the Province for the past seven years?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is it the Premier's opinion, in the absence of the Minister of Education, that the actions of these sixteen authorities in terms of fining, levying taxes, suing people and so on, has been, in fact, in defiance of the law?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, we do not decide that. That is decided by the courts.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I can get to something that can be decided on. There are people in this Province on low incomes, bare subsistence incomes, barely surviving, who are being threatened with court action by these School Tax Authorities that, in fact, in law do not even exist and have no authority.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Would the member pose his question?

MR. BAKER:

Because that situation is existing and these people are being threatened and frightened, will the Premier assure this House that this illegal harassment will be stopped until there is a resolution to this problem?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the premise of the hon. member's question.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. DECKER:

My question is for the hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Matthews). Since last night I have had time to reflect on the minister's entertainment allowance of \$300 a day. I reflect on how people have their lights cut for owning \$300, which is one T-bone steak meal for the minister. I reflect on the man and wife who get less than that much -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Would the hon. member ask his question?

MR. DECKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister explain to this House and to the people of Newfoundland how he has to account for spending this entertainment allowance of \$300 a day? How does he account

for it?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, out of courtesy, I guess, I will answer that question for the hon. member. I must say, with regards to what happened last night and the questions asked last night, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) and the member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) and the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) did not show up until nine-thirty, and the real goon squad was there from seven-thirty, led by the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle, and he is carrying on the same way this morning.

MR. DECKER:

Relevance! Relevance!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the minister is not answering the question. He is straying from the answer.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, we went for two hours last night, from seven-thirty to nine-thirty, in the Estimates Committee in which the Opposition, led by the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle, asked nothing only questions on the minister's transportation and entertainment. At that time I informed him that when it comes to expenses for ministers' entertainment -

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

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

MR. TULK:

I know the time is Question Period but is the hon. gentleman saying that the member for the Strait of Belle Isle does not have the right to ask those kinds of questions? Surely he has the right. It is a point of order for him to even stand up.

Mr. Speaker, questions should be short and to the point. I fail to see what the words 'goon squad' has to do with the question that was asked by the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. MATTHEWS:

To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order, The hon. the Minister of Culture Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I think the phrase 'goon squad' has as much to do with the answer here of this question as it did earlier this morning. The thing is last night at the Estimates Committee, Mr. Speaker, we went there with the officials of the department who were fully prepared to answers questions on this.

MR. DECKER:

Will you answer the question?

MR. MATTHEWS:

I will answer the question when I am permitted time to do it.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order. But I would ask the hon. minister to confine his answer to the question.

The hon. the Minister of Culture Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

As I advised the hon. member last night, Mr. Speaker, and advised the Committee, as it pertains to entertainment I am allowed \$300 a day expenses for entertainment. If I go beyond that I have to go to Treasury Board for approval. I account for every dollar spent in my department for transportation and entertainment by issuing receipts and am reimbursed accordingly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DECKER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, the minister was allocated \$3,700 and spent \$13,700, which is more than the annual income of many people in my district. I want to ask the minister where did this extra \$10,000 come from?

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

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

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I think last night at the Committee hearings much of the time was wasted by the hon. member dealing with the allowances that the ministers are entitled to. I would like to ask that hon. member does he account for the roughly \$20,000 he gets each year?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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

MR. DECKER:

My question, Mr. Speaker: Where did the extra \$10,000 come from? Does this mean that some community lost their baseball field or outdoor rink or something?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, Mr. Speaker. Any money that is voted and allocated under any subhead in this department is spent accordingly as it is voted and for that purpose. If there is \$300,000 or \$500,000 voted in Recreation Capital Grants for softball fields in this Province, then that is spent accordingly.

The situation is, Mr. Speaker, that it is very difficult to predict in 1986 - 1987 how many provincial conferences I will have to attend to represent this Province; how many recreation commissions, cultural groups and youth groups will request me to go to their conferences to speak to them? It is hard to predict how many recreation commissions will come to this city from around this Province to visit me, to request Recreation Capital Grants for improvements. It is hard to predict how many youth groups will come to see me to ask for funding for whatever they want for the year.

MR. DECKER:

A brief answer.

MR. MATTHEWS:

That is all tied in, Mr. Speaker, with travel in my portfolio, my mandate, as well as tied in with the entertainment that I have to put forward for this Province. As well, Mr. Speaker, I may have a federal minister visit this Province, or a minister from another provincial jurisdiction, and I think it is only natural and in line with Newfoundland hospitality to entertain them accordingly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

I thank the minister for explaining that his accountability is to give a receipt! Very accountable, actually. Is there any amount that the minister can spend and get reimbursed for—

MR. MATTHEWS:

Pardon?

MR. DECKER:

Is there any amount that the minister can spend on entertainment of his friends or delegations and get reimbursed for the expense without even having to present a receipt? Is there any amount, \$150, say?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, again, as I told the hon. member last night, for any expenses that I incur on behalf of government, I submit a claim, a travel claim or entertainment claim, with receipts duly stating the amount that I am claiming. Sometimes I pay in cash if I am fortunate to have enough, or I use my credit card and get reimbursed afterwards. That is how it is done. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is talking about accountability. I would like to go on record in this House of Assembly, as I went on record in the committee last night, and say, very sincerely and categorically, that every cent that has been spent on transportation and entertainment by me has been duly and fully accounted for. I stand by that. I do not make any apologies for the job that I have done in representing this Province and this portfolio either outside the Province or in the Province. It is all tied in with the job I am doing. As well, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to accountability, there are a lot of things that some people are not accountable for. I ask the hon. gentleman is he accountable for his district allowance? Does he spend all of his district allowance? And does he have two residences so he can claim his per diem? And is he accountable for the bank loan that he owes the provincial government?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

Just quickly, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister how does he account for the discrepancy between the \$3,700, which was allocated, I assume, by the wisdom of Treasury Board, the \$13,700?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I have already told the hon. gentleman the answer. I will try to go through it again. As I told him last night, there are six divisions in my department. By the way, you would never know that, Mr. Speaker, from the questions that were asked last night. On some divisions there was not one question asked. There are six divisions. It is a very diverse department, very, very diverse.

MR. DECKER:

You should be allocated more money.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It causes a lot of travel. Of course, a lot of members here are former members of the department. There are a lot of requests. For every invitation I accept, Mr. Speaker, I reject nine.

MR. DECKER:

The question is not on travel but entertainment.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It is a very demanding portfolio. It is hard to predict the amount of travel I will do in this fiscal year and the number of groups or people I will entertain this fiscal year. Consequently, Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of time in this Province, a certain amount of money is voted in a

fiscal year for travel, for entertainment and, I would say, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the revised amount in the 1985-86 Estimates, what is voted this year in the 1986-87 Estimates very closely come together because that gives some indication as to what the department is going to spend this year. No doubt, Mr. Speaker, we will not be right on the cent but the thing is we really cannot predict to the cent what we are going to spend this year on transportation and entertainment.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of Treasury Board.

The Premier appears to be suggesting that the NAPE dispute is now jeopardizing the Hibernia negotiations. Is the minister not concerned that this is and will be seen as a real, crude form of blackmail?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I have heard some silly questions but that one has to top all of them. First of all I am certainly not aware that the Premier has made any statements in relation to the NAPE dispute impacting negatively on the development of Hibernia. It certainly may leave an impression in the private sector of this Province or of this country or internationally, because you are talking an international type

development, that labour is unsettled here, Mr. Speaker. But on every occasions that I have had an opportunity to talk to people who were considering investing in our Province, I hastened to point out to them that over the past year we have now signed some twenty agreements with public sector unions. There is only this one particular group, Mr. Speaker, that we are having extreme difficulty with, as hon. gentlemen know. I think I can point to the other twenty agreements that we have signed in the past twelve months with a great deal of pride and I think that indicates that there is reason in the union membership in this Province. I also point to the fact that the construction industry unions have been extremely responsible and have responded quite positively to proposals that have been put forward. Certainly there is no blackmail, Mr. Speaker, and I think the hon. gentleman should reconsider whether he should be using that kind of a term in this House. I do not think it is parliamentary, and I think it is certainly unbecoming to the hon. member even.

MR. FLIGHT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, would the minister take this opportunity to indicate to the House what the government's objection to third party arbitration is? Surely the minister will concede that when a union such as NAPE indicates that it is willing to accept arbitration, that is an indication that they are looking for an

honourable way out of a dispute, an honourable face-saving way to end the dispute. Would the minister take the occasion to tell us why he is not prepared to entertain third party arbitration?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I realize the hon. gentleman would not understand this but we have been involved in third party mediation now for a number of weeks. We have the Deputy Minister of Labour, two conciliation officers and indeed the Minister of Labour (Mr. Blanchard), and these people are some of the most highly experienced and highly respected labour mediators in this Province or anywhere in Canada. So we have had extremely high quality mediation services over the past number of weeks. As it relates to third party arbitration, Mr. Speaker, first of all with some seventy items still on the table, boot allowances and tool allowances and silly items like that that should have been dealt with at the bargaining table. If there were willingness on the opposite side to be reasonable and responsible and to negotiate in an attempt to find an agreement, all of these items would have been out of the way long before this, Mr. Speaker, and we would be talking only about the issues for which many of our employees actually went out on the streets which are wage parity and Bill 59, both of which have been dealt with by this government in accordance with the back-to-work agreement. You do not put seventy items to a mediator or an arbitrator, Mr. Speaker, and expect him to deal with them. I point out that this

particular union prides itself on having the right to strike. This is their whole dispute with Bill 59, that they feel it takes away from the right to strike. The hon. gentleman should know, but I know he does not so I should tell him, Mr. Speaker, that a union either has the right to strike or it has a right to binding arbitration. You cannot have your cake and eat it too. Their whole cry has been the right to strike. We gave them the right to strike. Bill 59 does not take away from the right to strike, but they cannot come back and have binding arbitration too.

MR. FLIGHT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Will the minister concede or agree that the arbitration procedure is finally called for since this dispute has degenerated into a publicity war where the stakes appear to be, to the general public now, the destruction of that unit and its leadership?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, there is no attempt by this government to destroy the union or its leadership. I have had people outside comment that the leadership seems to be self-destructing, but there is no attempt from this government to destroy either the union or its leadership. The dispute, indeed, has degenerated to a point where we have one side that appears to be totally unwilling to negotiate

in good faith. We have acted very reasonably and responsibly and in accordance with the back-to-work agreement which has been signed. We have more than fulfilled the commitments that we made in that back-to-work agreement.

One of those commitments, I might inform the hon. gentleman, was to negotiate reasonably and responsibly and it is about time that the union did that.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

I have a question for the Premier. I think the issue was raised the other day by the Leader of the Opposition when he questioned the Premier on the general Labour and Trades Agreement that has recently been signed, pointing out that indeed Sections 15 and 16 of the Constitution may have been put in jeopardy, that, indeed, we were being discriminated against on the basis of geography.

Is the Premier aware that there is a contract about to be ratified under the Public Service Alliance of Canada with the ships' crews that operate, icebreakers, Coast Guard ships, etc., and is he aware that those people, even though they meet, I understand, at some point in the year and tie up side by side in Cambridge Bay, that those ships' crews, in some cases, come from Newfoundland and will be paid under the new agreement some \$200 less than people in other parts of Canada? Indeed, does he agree with that kind of discrimination being carried out against Newfoundlanders?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should be very careful when he chooses his words about discrimination and uses section 6 (2) and Section 15 (1) of the Charter of Rights. I have a legal opinion in my hands which I will table for the hon. member and this legal opinion says that the Charter of Rights is not being violated and, therefore, we cannot claim discrimination under the Charter of Rights.

MR. TULK:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, my question was to the hon. gentleman. I appreciate his legal opinion but it is discrimination.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
It is not my legal opinion.

MR. TULK:
No, I appreciate the legal opinion that you have. It is discrimination and it is discrimination according to geography. There is no doubt about that. The President of Treasury Board in Ottawa yesterday evening made the statement that this was being done because, in certain sections of the country, you had to be tied to what private enterprise was paying.

I would ask the Premier if he agrees that this type of discrimination, and it is discrimination, against equal pay for equal work? Does he agree that we should tie wages of the Public

Service of Canada to private enterprise in a particular area, or will he approach the federal government to see if indeed this discrimination ends?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, it is a matter that is under federal jurisdiction and has nothing to do with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I have undertaken to get a legal opinion on whether in fact the Charter is being violated under Section (6) or Section (15). I have now tabled a copy of that legal opinion for the hon. member and for members opposite. As I understand it, the unions that are representing the workers in this particular case support what is being done in the zoning of various parts of the country in this application. Apparently they are about to sign, and they have signed in the past, along those lines. I am still investigating the situation but it is a matter under federal jurisdiction and not under provincial jurisdiction at all. I would rather that the hon. member ask me questions about things that I have some direct control over. I do not have control over the unions that represent the workers, and the government does not have control over the Government of Canada. The Government of Canada is the senior government in this country and therefore the hon. member is asking me to do something that is completely out of my jurisdiction. I will investigate it further, but I do hasten to add to the hon. member that it is not within the jurisdiction of the Province, number one, and, number two, there seems to be willingness by the unions to pursue this

course of action in various rates of pay across the country.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

I would point out to the hon. gentleman two things; first of all, unions are not infallible, and I would also point out that I am happy to see his conversion since we have a Tory Government in Ottawa, that indeed anything now outside of provincial jurisdiction is not his responsibility. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the hon. gentleman if he would try to influence his Tory blood brothers in Ottawa to halt this form of discrimination where Newfoundlanders are being paid unjustly \$200 less than some of their Canadian brothers. The Premier is a big man on our place in Confederation. I ask him would he approach his federal Tory brothers to see that this discrimination ends?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I cannot understand talking about my fellow Conservatives in Ottawa, because this was a policy that was pursued by the Liberal Party of Canada when they were in government for years.

MR. TULK:

That is not the point.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Of course it is not the point. But the hon. member is allowed to indicate that it is because there are Conservatives now up there and

Conservatives down here, even though it was a Liberal policy for many, many years and perhaps for good reasons, I do not know. But as I told the hon. member I will continue to check it out to see whether there is really any basis to some of the allegations the hon. member is making.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, regardless of whether there is a Liberal Government in Ottawa or a PC Government in Ottawa, the Premier has to live up to a commitment that he made to the people of this Province that if they put a PC Government in Ottawa and a PC Government in Newfoundland, all will be well. Now I would ask him if he will, in this particular case, attempt to carry out that promise that he made to the people of Newfoundland last year and put some pressure on the federal government to end this discrimination. Cut out the nonsense!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I have been trying for the last few days to respond to questions here and to provide information to hon. members and I thought I was doing a fairly good job on it. I have just said to the hon. member, in answer to a question two or three times, I am still checking it out. I have the legal opinion now as it relates to the Charter. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) alleged a couple of days ago that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was

being violated because of this contract between federal workers and the federal government.

MR. TULK:

'Brian', you are really something!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Just one second now, let me speak. I have the floor. I am allowed to speak in silence. I never said anything when you were up asking questions, so let me answer.

So, therefore, I have kept that commitment. I have responded. I have given hon. members a legal opinion that the Charter of Rights is not being violated under Section (6) and Section (15), and I have told the hon. member over and over again I am still trying to get more information from Labour Canada and from other agencies within the federal bureaucracy so that I can make a determination myself as to whether there is any validity in the allegations the hon. member is making. If there is some validity, then I am going to take it up; if there is not I am not.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, I was telling the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Russell) yesterday that a spokesman for Shell admitted that profits are being made from the decreasing world oil prices on the backs of the consumers. And we see it again yesterday in the business section of *The Globe and Mail*, 'Shell set to keep parts of benefits from oil price fall.' Now that the minister has had time

to find the article proving that the oil companies are sheltering under the oil price reductions for their own direct profits, what action is the minister contemplating to counter such a move for the benefit of the consumers of Newfoundland and Labrador?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member for St. Barbe never had a radio or a newspaper I do not know what he would do. I am amazed, Mr. Speaker, that he can read. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for St. Barbe yesterday referred to a statement made on CBC radio yesterday morning and now allegedly in a newspaper. I indicated to him at that time, Mr. Speaker, that I will get the full text of that statement and after doing that I will be prepared to make some statement on it. The officials in my department are trying this morning to get the full text, not just the excerpt from the newspaper which media of all kinds seem to take out of context at times, particularly, the CBC, Mr. Speaker. When I have had a chance to look at that statement in its complete and full context, Mr. Speaker, only at that point in time I will make a statement.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier ever have a bad mad on for the CBC, I do not understand that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. I mentioned to him yesterday that a quick survey done by the Liberal Opposition across the Province showed the price of diesel oil has been at sixty-five cents a litre or \$3.20 a gallon, and it has not really budged, Mr. Speaker, since the world price of crude fell.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Would the hon. member pose his question?

MR. FUREY:

It is a new question.

MR. RUSSELL:

It is not a new question.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the minister why the price of diesel across this Province has not budged since we have seen the world price of a barrel of oil cut by more than half four months ago. There are a lot of independent truckers out there gearing up for the construction season who are scratching their heads wondering why this crude product, above every other product, is not cut more than gasoline?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer

Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) made a statement this morning reflecting some kind of a tax reduction on diesel products. The initial findings, Mr. Speaker, that I have been able to obtain show as hon. members know, there is certainly not nearly as much diesel oil bought as there is gasoline, leaded, unleaded, etc. I have been given the information that most of the diesel presently in stock was purchased a fair time ago at the higher prices.

MR. EFFORD:

Oh, come on! Prove it.

MR. RUSSELL:

The member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford), Mr. Speaker, does not want to listen to the answer to the question. He does not believe anything that is said. He is all for giving out false and wrong information, but he does not believe the truth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He is a rumour monger.

MR. EFFORD:

The rumour must have started at the tanks where they are still paying just as much as they did last year.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, the information that I have, which I am passing on to this Legislature, is that most of the diesel now in the tanks was purchased some time ago at high prices and thus the reason for the exceptionally slow decline at the pumps. When the buyers purchase

diesel at the lower cost, it will be passed on to the consumers.

MR. FUREY:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. FUREY:

The minister is telling us that all of the diesel in this Province that truckers are buying was bought some four or five months ago at the old prices and there is no new priced diesel in the system in this entire Province. The minister is telling us that the only thing that he can tell truckers, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Would the hon. member please pose a question?

MR. FUREY:

My question is this -

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Ask a question, boy!

MR. FUREY:

Why do you not ask the Premier to clam up? If he has a problem with CBC, Mr. Speaker, that is quite one thing, but we, in the Opposition, are not going to be obstructed by this wimp.

MR. SPEAKER:

Would the hon. member please pose his question?

MR. FUREY:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is this: Is the only break in this Province for diesel fuel for truckers four-tenths of a cent?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe, Mr. Speaker, is trying his utmost to be emotional, but I do not think he knows the meaning of the word.

Mr. Speaker, I have not said that all the diesel in this Province was purchased three or four months ago. I contacted, through my department, some of the diesel distributors in this Province - not all of them, and I am sure the hon. member has not contacted every single one in the Province either - and I would like to think that some of the diesel fuel that has been purchased recently at lower prices has been passed and will be passed on to the consumer. If it is not, then the hon. member has a good point.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Stephenville..

MR. K. AYLWARD:

I have got a question for the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Considering that he stood in his place and voted against the Private Member's bill that would have seen an enquiry into the oil price situation in Newfoundland, because he obviously does not know what he is talking about, will the minister consider an enquiry to find out what is going on instead of giving us answers when he does not know what he is talking about?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member for Stephenville consider what side he is on in selling the apartments in Stephenville? That is something that he should answer.

Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to this House that the consumers are getting some breaks at the pumps.

MR. FLIGHT:

Put some pavement on the Lewisport Road this year.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, the crackie from Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) is not even in his own place. Mr. Speaker, could I have silence from the member for Windsor - Buchans?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of answering that question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout) and it is related to the problems and complexities associated with the fish plant at Greenspond.

In view of the approach of the fishing season I am rather concerned. I have contacted the minister and I am pleased with the co-operation I have gotten so far, but I am not totally pleased with

the progress that has been made to date. I want to ensure that the fish plant is going to be open for this fishing season. As I have said, we are dangerously close to the fishing season. So I wonder if the minister can comment on the complexities and the problems related to this fish plant and whether we are getting these problems resolved.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. gentleman rightly points out in the preamble to his question, it is a very complex situation that we are trying to unravel at the present time as it relates to the receivership of Greenspond Fisheries. The company did go into receivership and a receiver was appointed and the receiver called for proposals for a new owner - operator and several proposals were made, one of which was acceptable to the receiver and recommended to the creditors. Then certain other complexities came into the problem and that company withdrew its proposal and then the second company in the whole proposal business was contacted and their interest was reactivated.

So we are moving along as quickly as we can, Mr. Speaker, and keeping a close eye on it. I understand and appreciate the hon. gentleman's concern for the fishery about to start in that area over the next few days.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is just time for a short question and answer.

MR. LUSH:

I wonder if the minister can indicate now to assure the people of this House and the people of Greenspond, because there are some 150 workers employed in that plant at peak season, whether or not we have a legitimate offer? Does it look like this is going to be resolved? Will this company that made the second offer be able to operate in time for the fishing season without any due loss? Maybe, if the minister is in a position, he could name the company.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. gentleman's concern and I can tell him, and through him his constituents, that we are very pleased now that Beothuck Fisheries of Valleyfield have come to an agreement with the receiver and they have just recently, over the last several hours, made a request to my department for the transfer of licenses. I fully believe, and have every reason to believe and be certain that the Greenspond plant will be quite ready to be operated by some of the finest operators in the fish business in Newfoundland today, Beothuck Fisheries Limited.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

Presenting Reports by
Standing and Special Committees

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to present the Annual Report of the Livestock Owners Compensation Board.

Notices of Motion

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice I will on tomorrow move that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider certain resolution relating to the raising of loans by the Province.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled "An Act To Amend The Newfoundland Public Service Commission Act, 1973."

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, as a follow up from yesterday's answers that I gave, I indicated that I had more. I have during Question Period tabled the legal opinion on the whole question of a violation of the Charter of Rights as it relates to contracts between certain federal employees and the federal government. I also undertook a couple of days ago to get additional information on questions directed at the Workers' Compensation Board. I have given answers to all the questions except one.

The one question that I did not have an answer for yesterday, which I have an answer for today, is why the increase in fatalities in 1985 compared to 1984. One of the major reasons is that for the first time in 1985 the Board included deaths as a result of industrial disease. That was not included in previous reports. There were seven I think.

MR. TULK:
Does the Premier have the numbers here?

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Yes, I have the figures here for the hon. member.

Comparison shows a decrease in industrial disease deaths from thirteen to seven but an increase in deaths due to trauma from twenty-three to thirty. The Workers' Compensation Commission is not able to explain or give any reason for the increase in fatalities due to trauma. It is possible that the Occupational Health and Safety Division may be able to provide a more in-depth

analysis of that. They may have more data relating to trauma. So I will table that for the hon. members because they asked me for it a couple of days ago.

I would also like to table an answer to a question from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) concerning free trade. Here is an excerpt of a book on free trade to round out what I was saying yesterday in trying to give a full answer to the Leader of the Opposition. Just about every expert in Canada that has studied this matter indicates that if we were able to get an expanded free trade agreement with the United States, it would mean somewhere between \$12 billion to \$24 billion to the Canadian economy and upwards to \$4,000 more for every Canadian family. I want to table that for the benefit of hon. members.

Petitions

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, I am pleased on behalf of 92 residents of Cloud Drive in Roddickton to present this petition. I will read the prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker.

"We, the resident of Cloud Drive, Roddickton, hereby pray the hon. House of Assembly will instruct the hon. the Premier and the hon. the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) to take immediate action to have Route 432

completely upgraded and paved."

Mr. Speaker, I would call the attention of members of this House to the extremely civil way that those citizens have chosen to make their feelings known. They do not demand, they do not threaten, they are humbly praying. It says something for the respect that those people have for law and order. It says something of their perception of the system where they can make their desires known to this hon. Assembly through the very civilized way of sending in a petition.

It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that the harsh reality is that we have a government which only responds to roads being blocked, which only responds to attempts to dig holes in the road and attempts to obstruct. This is what has happened in this Province, where this particular administration has allowed the whole system to degenerate to such a state that when reasonable people request in a very law abiding, very civilized way, their demands are very often ignored.

Mr. Speaker, this is the eleventh day that I have stood in this House and presented a petition from a group of people who have grown concerned with the condition of Route 432 which is the main lifeline going into that particular part of the Strait of Belle Isle district. I have stood here for the eleventh day. This is the eleventh time, Mr. Speaker, and I am asking, on behalf of those people, my people, that this road would be paved. We are asking that the hon. the Premier and the hon. the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) would take immediate action to see that road is totally upgraded and paved.

There are many "Whereases", Mr. Speaker, which I am sure Your Honour will have the opportunity to go over when he sees this petition. One of the "Whereases" says that "WHEREAS the people of Roddickton depend upon this road for all ambulance service to the hospital in St. Anthony." I want to zero in on the use of that road by ambulances.

Not very long ago in the district of the Strait of Belle Isle there was a small hospital or a nursing station in Englee; not very long ago there was a small hospital or a nursing station in the town of Roddickton; not very long ago there was a nursing station in the community of Conche. This is the way it used to be. This is the way health services used to be delivered not just to the Strait of Belle Isle but all over Newfoundland.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there has been a evolution or a revolution in the delivery of health care in this Province. What is happening is larger hospitals are being established at various centers around the Province, which is a good thing.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, I will come back to it tomorrow. I have more petitions.

MR. J. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. J. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise to support the sentiments expressed by the member but I would also like to offer some advise. The poor people who are petitioning this House through their member might care to rethink who they get to present their petition. A member who accuses members on this side of the House or on any side of the House of coming to committee meetings drunk is a disgrace to this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

That comment has already been withdrawn.

MR. J. CARTER:

I am glad to hear it, Mr. Speaker. I will not pursue it any further.

But I do suggest that the member's tactics and strategy are entirely wrong. These people who wish these roads to be upgraded and possibly paved certainly have a right to have their views heard in this House. But it is no help to them when their views are presented by one of the more obnoxious members from the Opposition.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to support the petition so ably presented by my colleague from the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker). I will ignore the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) because I do not think

that was really in support of any petition. It was again an attack on anyone who lives outside the overpass by a merchant prince or whatever he is within St. John's.

It is indeed a pleasure to be able to support this petition on behalf of the ninety-two residents of Roddickton.

As both my colleague and I represent rural districts in Newfoundland, I feel it is a shame and a crime that we have to stand here in this House of Assembly and pray to the government, the members opposite, to do something about paving gravel roads in the Province of Newfoundland.

We have had much discussion this morning on the topic of committee meetings. Usually when we Opposition members ask questions in committee meetings, we do not get many answers. People try to skate around them - I will not say mislead - but skate around the questions they are asked which are meaningful to the people of Newfoundland.

However, I did ask a question of the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) in the estimates committee last week, one which he answered very quickly. The question I asked him was, "How many kilometers of gravel road were still left in Newfoundland." He very quickly said 3,400. In the meantime, in my research before coming to this committee meeting, I had checked the Estimates for 1983-84, where someone, in his wisdom, had asked the minister that question. Do you know what the minister's answer was at that time? - 3,400 kilometers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if this is the

progress that we have made in Newfoundland - we have had two years now since those Estimates were presented and they are still saying there are 3,400 kilometers of gravel road. So again, that bears out what the people of Newfoundland are now beginning to know every day: We have a 'know nothing' government and a 'do nothing' government across there. They have, in over three years, not paved one kilometer of gravel road in Newfoundland. Now, this is the crime that I see concerning this government.

When the minister himself stated it, I assumed it is true, because I am sure he would not try to mislead me. The point is that I represent a district in which there are over ninety kilometers of that 3,400 kilometers of gravel road, and it is the lifeline to the South Coast of Newfoundland, the communities of Burgeo, Ramea, Grey River, and Francois. All the freight that goes in there is basically brought over that road right now. The fish that comes from the fish plants is shipped out over that road and they are surcharged by the trucking companies because of the fact that this road is a gravel road. They claim it is a secondary road, but I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that it should not be considered a secondary road but a main road, because it is the lifeline to at least 7,000 Newfoundlanders.

My colleague from the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker) talks about the ambulance service to St. Anthony. The people who live in the areas of Burgeo and Ramea have to come over that road to Corner Brook, and very, very sick people are transported over a road that is not fit to put a D-8 tractor on

in this twentieth century in Newfoundland.

So it gives me great pleasure to be able to support my colleague. I wish that some of the uncaring members on the other side of the House would listen and do something about it. If we are going to go on with 3,400 kilometers of unpaved road, is that the answer the Minister of Transportation is going to give me next year? We will be into the twenty-first century and still at that point. Fortunately, the people of Newfoundland will change that after the next election and then we will get something done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Orders of the Day

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Motion 5.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Labour to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Labour Standards Act, carried. (Bill No. 21).

On motion, Bill No. 21, read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Order 15.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Department Of Environment Act." (Bill No.3).

MR. SPEAKER:

The debate was adjourned by the hon. member for Gander (Mr. Baker), who has fourteen minutes left.

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am saddened to hear that I have only fourteen minutes left, and I am sure that members opposite will give leave at the end to allow me to continue and finish my remarks on the Department of the Environment.

Mr. Speaker, to summarize where I was at the end of my remarks yesterday, I was making the case to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Butt) that he do a complete investigation to determine whether it would be better from an environmental point of view to use Bt in the forests of Newfoundland, rather than fenitrothion. I was pointing out in general terms some of the effects of fenitrothion and pointing out to the minister that I had an extensive library and I will be glad to share some of that library with him at some future time.

The minister, to one of my remarks, and I do not think Hansard will carry it, because his mike probably was not on, but he made the comment that there is no indication from New Brunswick that fenitrothion damages birds. I believe that was the implication I got from the minister's comment. I do not want to say that the minister is probably not up on this. I do not really want to say that because, as I pointed out yesterday, he is, in fact, a rookie minister and it takes a long time to get up-to-date on all environmental matters.

However, since he believes that with all this mass of information that there is no prove that fenitrothion is damaging to birds and he is planning to spray it on the forests with the okay of the

Department of Environment, I simply went downstairs, Mr. Speaker, and pulled out a few volumes from my library on fenitrothion.

I would refer him to a publication through Environment New Brunswick entitled Environmental Monitoring Of Forest Insect Control Operations. This report was on the 1983 operations, so it is not that old. It is fairly recent. It was actually put together in July of 1984. It has been readily available now for a year and a half to the minister. Two of the leading investigators in this regard in the Province of New Brunswick - I am specifically talking about the Province of New Brunswick - two of the leading investigators with Environment Canada working out of New Brunswick - and I am sure the minister would recognize these names, if I were to use them - they state the following; and I would very briefly like to quote from this document. I will allow the minister to have a copy of it afterwards. They say, in summary, 'sporadic loss of song birds seems inevitable when fenitrothion is sprayed at currently recommended operational dosages,' which is what they were investigating.

It has been revealed, also, they point out, and I mentioned this yesterday in my remarks, that the probability of much more universal sublethal effects exist for exposed individuals in representative species. They point out that clearly the use of an insecticide less impactive on, specifically, song birds, then fenitrothion, would be preferable.

So I point out to the minister that it is very easy to sit there

and when a member on this side of the House mentions that something that he is planning to do is going to be damaging to song birds, it is very easy for the minister, Mr. Speaker, to sit there and say, "there has been no proof." In fact, Mr. Speaker, there is ample proof. Scientific studies carried out by leading scientists with Environment Canada do show, in fact, that the minister is not correct.

Now, I am not saying this to be critical of the minister, I would like to point out again. I am saying this simply to point out that there is a body of knowledge out there concerning this chemical that he is okaying for use in the forest that would take a lot of time to peruse and an effort should be made by the minister to obtain all of this information and to try to absorb, if he can, all this information concerning the chemical that he is allowing to be sprayed. Again, I have volumes in my library concerning Bt and the use of Bt. I point out to the minister that there is no evidence - and there has been an awful lot of spraying of Bt all across Canada - there is no evidence that Bt has any such effect on non-target species. Bt is specific to the organism that you want to kill in forest spraying efforts.

So, I point out to the minister that he should seriously weigh the two alternatives. Now, it is not up to - and this is a very important point, Mr. Speaker - it is not up to the Department of Forestry to make such a decision. I know that the Department of Forestry comes to the minister and says, 'Look, this is what we want to do, would you please rubber stamp it for us. The Minister of

the Environment, would you please rubber stamp it.' I know that is what they do. The forestry people sometimes, particularly the minister, can be a bit heavy-handed in this regard. However, it is not the decision of the Department of Forestry.

There may be many concerns, Mr. Speaker, but their concern might be to do it as cheaply as possible. I happen to know that the original application of Bt is perhaps a little more expensive than the application of fenitrothion but they may have other concerns as well that have nothing to do with the environment and with the effect on non-target species. All they are concerned about is killing the hemlock looper. That is all they concerned about and as Minister of Environment (Mr. Butt) he should really be the Minister of the Environment and really look at these things in terms of what is good for the environment. If it means that he has to fight with the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms), then sobeit, fight, because if the Minister of the Environment can determine in his own mind that the use of Bt is better than fenitrothion, this chemical that has so much damning evidence against it, then it is his duty to fight the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands and not only that, I would support him strongly in it because he would be right. Mr. Speaker, enough said about that particular spray programme.

There are many other environmental problems in this Province. I would like though, before I go on to the next topic, to make an offer to the minister and I do this in all seriousness. I would offer to take one week of my time

this Summer, free of charge, to provide for the minister a seminar on insecticide use in our forests, as well as use of herbicides and so on. I would be willing to take a week of my time if it would be of any use to the minister to put on a seminar so that the minister can examine attitudes concerning forest spraying and the alternative, whether it be forest spraying against insects, or forest spraying against hardwood, whatever the case may be. I would be glad to provide him with an educational seminar to ensure that the minister is up to date on the relevant information.

So that is a serious offer and I am sure the minister will consider taking me up on it. Maybe we can get together some time in August I would suggest to the minister, because I am kind of busy the first part of July. There are other concerns as I said, Mr. Speaker, besides the spraying for the hemlock looper and I am sure the minister will take these concerns seriously.

A concern that is even greater, and I have expressed this concern to the minister before, is the spraying of our forests to kill the kinds of trees that are not used in the logging operations. I am talking about the use of herbicides as a forest management tool.

The use of herbicides has been fairly widespread throughout the world as a forest management tool. The problem is that first when these herbicides were put into use, there was not a great volume of research done on them. There was no attempt to try to determine whether the herbicides had undesirable effects. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, it is

kind of impossible to do that in the short term because many of the effects of chemicals in the environment, as the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Butt) knows, are long term effects and can only be studied over a period of twenty, twenty-five years or whatever. So first when the herbicides were used, they were seen as the best thing since the invention of the safety pin. It is very simple, you have your spruce and fir trees and you can take an airplane and go over it and spray those herbicides to kill the other species that might grow up, like the maple and the birch and the alder and whatever that might grow up to compete with the spruce and fir trees, and it worked.

It was not until I guess the war in Vietnam when there was rather extensive use of herbicides, a combination of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T to try to wipe out the deciduous vegetation in Vietnam so that the Viet Cong could not hide under the vegetation, wipe out the vegetation so that it would be easier to wipe out the Viet Cong. They used a combination of these two chemicals I mentioned, 2,4-D, 2,,4,5-T. They put in the spray, because they wanted to make sure that they knew where that spray was going, an orange dye and the combination thereafter became infamously known as Agent Orange.

I am not suggesting that the minister is going to spray Agent Orange. I do not want to get that thing going. He is not. But I would like to point out that this was the first time that the effects of herbicides were seriously questioned. Sure they did the job they were supposed to do, but they also did a lot of other things and caused a lot of

extreme damage. As a result of the tremendous damage done by this Agent Orange in Vietnam and the tremendous damage that is still being done, because a lot of the damage is genetic and children are still being born with the effects of the Agent Orange in Vietnam, because of that, they isolated the 2,,4,5-T with its high concentration of other chemicals called dioxins, which are really a by-product of the production 2,,4,5-T. They isolated that as the main culprit. So that since that time a lot of research has been done in reducing the level of a particular dioxin in 2,4,5-T and 2,4,5-T is very rarely used now. The minister is not suggesting that this be used on our forests. However, the other component, 2,4-D is contemplated as being used and has been used in this Province and, I suppose, will continue to be used as long as the Department of the Environment allows it.

Mr. Speaker, this to me is a problem because I suspect that, whereas right now the use of herbicides is limited in forestry, it is also limited along transmission lines and along the sides of highways and so on. They use different kinds of herbicides there. The kind that goes into the roots rather than spraying. Sometimes they use spray along the highways. But it is fairly limited. What I fear, Mr. Minister of the Environment, through Mr. Speaker, is that the use of herbicides in the forestry industry is going to become so widespread that twenty years down the line we will be looking back at this Minister of Environment and saying, "Why did he not stop it."

I would suggest as well that the

Minister of the Environment check into the advisability of using these substances to control hardwood growth. I suggest he look into the advisability and gather together the literature that exists on this very dangerous chemical that he allows to be sprayed on the forests.

Mr. Speaker, because of my limited time again, enough on that topic. Again, I could provide the minister in the seminar with information concerning 2,4-D that I have available, along with exactly how the substance works.

There are other important environmental problems. Some of them have been mentioned in this House already. There is the storage of PCB's and the minister is very familiar with this one because we had dialogue on it last year. He has done his research on where the PCB's are in the Province, how they are stored and so on. But there have been some disturbing reports recently about the PCB's that have been coming to my ears. There have also been some disturbing reports about the possibilities that the minister mentioned a year ago of this new revolutionary device that was going to be brought into the Province and the portable unit will be used to destroy PCB's.

The reports I have been getting is that the research so far in the development of this portable destruction unit shows that that may be some time down the road. The way that the thing works is not as efficient as they thought it would be. The products that come out after this tremendous heat is generated, because this is the only way it can be destroyed, through tremendous heat -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the member's time is up.

MR. BAKER:
Do I have leave from the House,
Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:
Is there leave?

MR. BUTT:
Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:
To what extent?

MR. BUTT:
A couple of minutes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. member has two minutes.

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The indications are that even after these tremendous temperatures have been reached, there are a couple of problems with it. The temperature, it seems, cannot be maintained at the level required for long enough. At that point then, the by-products that come out the other end are not the desirable by-products that we hope to create. So there may be a problem in PCB disposal. I would suggest to the minister that one of the environmental problems that has to be looked into is that we have to assume that we are not going to have that portable unit. Now, what do we do with the PCBs in this Province? How can we better ensure that those chemicals do not get out into the environment? How can we better safeguard and make sure that people are not using them as fuel and all this kind of thing?

Mr. Speaker, I barely started my

comments on the Department of Environment. I will finish in just a couple of sentences by saying that I support the particular bill here. It think is a good move. I think it is a very small step, Mr. Speaker, in the right direction.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

Before the hon. minister rises to close the debate, I would like to give my ruling on a matter of privilege which was raised a couple of days ago by the hon. member for Torngat Mountains pertaining to the broadcast of the NHL Hockey Games in French. The hon. member rose on a point of privilege. We have considered the matter, and my ruling is that there has been no breach of privilege. Although the matter is undesirable, I am sure, to a great number of our people across the Province, the privileges of the hon. member in his ability or any other hon. member to perform their duties as members of the House have not been impinged or violated. Therefore, there is no prime facie case.

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Could I have a few comments on the legislation, Mr. Speaker?

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

First of all, I would like to compliment my colleague for Gander (Mr. Baker) on an excellent speech. He brings out many questions that need to be answered and a very many good ideas. I too support the legislation in a sense that it is going to make companies more accountable for the environment and for what they do to it or for what they may do to it.

I have a few concerns, specifically, one in my district where PCBs are stored, I believe. I have had a lot of expression of concern from constituents and I think I should try to allay those fears as much as possible, which I am trying to do. If I can get information on that, I would appreciate it very much because what we have seen so far in the information that we have on PCBs they are very dangerous. In Ontario last year, when they had an accident with them, they had spent a great deal of money and they went through a great deal of trouble to make sure that there would not be any PCBs in existence or any affects left over from PCBs. So I want to bring that to the minister when he goes back to his office and gets the info on it.

This bill I can say is a good bill in the sense of making people accountable. In this Province, we promote tourism and we try to get people to come here. If we are going to do that we have to make good laws which will make people keep this Province clean and healthy for the population. I support the move, but I feel that we could be doing a lot more.

I feel we could be pumping a lot more advertising into a publicly campaign to make people more aware

to keep this Province clean. I feel we could do a way better job there than we have been doing. The Department of Tourism could be doing that, and the Department of Environment. I think they should ask for more money to promote this Province and to promote the cleaning up of this Province.

On another matter, I have been reading over the Environment Impact Statement by Mobil Oil. I think it relates very much to the spill in the sense that Clause (1) of the bill, would provide that costs incurred by the minister in cleaning up the environment where pollution occurs are a debt due to and recoverable by Her Majesty from the person or municipal authority.

I have been reading over this report and I have a few concerns that I would like to bring to the minister. They say that there is a 20 per cent chance of a responsive effectiveness in the Summertime and 5 per cent in the Winter of getting a clean up that would be effective and so on. They say there is not much that he can really do at the present time.

I want to make sure that the minister is aware and that the general public is aware that we have to make oil companies very accountable and to make sure that they are very careful when they are out there drilling, when they are out there trying to explore for offshore gas and oil. They must be very careful with our environment out there. There is a lot at stake. They need to take it very seriously because if we have an oil spill or gas blowout, we are looking at some extreme damage being done to our environment, to our fishery. I

think that there is not enough said and there is not enough emphasis being put on that. So when I see this bill, I am not if the Atlantic Accord is included. I know it includes environmental impacts and clean ups, but I would like to make sure that the minister addresses that from his department's point of view because I believe it means a great deal to everybody in Newfoundland and Labrador. If that should occur, and it has occurred in other parts of the world where they have done exploration, we could see the ruination of a lifestyle here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

To the Minister of Environment, I again say I will support the legislation, but I want to bring that concern to you because I do not believe there is enough emphasis out there. There is only about a page or a quarter of a page in this whole thing about what will happen or what we can do. Their final conclusion is that they recognize their present capabilities for oil spill clean up offshore are severely limited by the harsh environmental conditions at the Hibernia site. I do not have any answers and I am sure that if there were things that could be done you would have them out there, but we have to place more of an emphasis, we have to push and push the oil companies; we have to push our educational institutions to try to come up with some way to protect our offshore resources, and by that I mean also the fishing resource because if we do not, we are in a lot of trouble.

The Minister of Development (Mr. Barrett) came out the other day with a good announcement about wanting to develop our own technology in this Province so we

could be leaders in that. I think we could become a very big leader if we could come up with some technologies to address, for example, oil spills, because there is very little at the present time that is really safe or is very effective.

So I kind of want to issue a challenge, in a sense, to the oil companies working together with our educational institutions to come up and keep working on it, and pump the money into getting a more effective manner to protect against an oil spill, to protect against a gas blowout and so on because that will be a doomsday for this Province if that ever occurs and we are not capable of handling that.

I know that the Environmental Impact Statement was carried out. I know it is in legislation that we are required to do it and that is a good, positive move. I just want to put it to the minister that we have to keep pressing the oil companies, to keep pressing our educational institutions, and if we have them set up now. We have a good one set up to develop offshore technology. I think that probably the biggest priority is what can we come up with to protect ourselves from the possible consequences, because they are grave and they are dire. We all want to see, for example, an offshore petroleum industry. Nobody would ever go against it, but you have to consider what the result will be if we do not go at it in a very safe manner, taking every precautions in the world.

I want to tell the minister I hope he is considering all of that and, as a direct result, this bill will help address that as the EIS by Mobil here does. We are the

people who have a stake in the whole thing; we are the people who have to live here; we are the people who will stay here for the next one hundred or two hundred years after the oil companies are come and gone. We should make sure for our fishermen in this Province and for everybody else who enjoys the tremendous wealth we have here in our forestry and in our fishery that is not ruined for a short term gain. That is a major point that should be addressed and continuously put forward by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Butt) and by the provincial government because we will be in a lot of trouble one of these days if we do not prepare ourselves, if we do not keep pushing for proper safeguards for the offshore development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you.

You see, hon. gentlemen across the way, my speech is a very good one indeed and I am making some excellent points on this and I think I am raising a very good -

MR. BUTT:

It is not relevant to the bill.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

It is very relevant to the bill. The bill is an environment bill which makes people accountable, businesses and everybody. It says here it makes them accountable. I think it is very relevant. Even if I get off the topic, I think it is very relevant because it has to do with the environment. So I am not going to worry too much about that. Just from my reading of it, I think it is very relevant and I think it should be very much

addressed. So I just do not want you to just shove it off as not really being part of the specific bill. I am addressing the wording of the bill and the intent of the bill. I think that is what should be addressed by the minister not some strict wording of the bill. So, if he would heed my comments, I think he and the administration will be a lot better off in the future and so will this Province, instead of shoving off comments to the side.

I would like to close my remarks by saying that I support the legislation but in the overall context I want him to take my comments that I have put forward in a very positive sense. I just want to express my concern for the environment and especially the offshore environment, even if this bill does not specifically do that, I want to bring it up anyway.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Hickey):

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

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, before the vote is called I would like to say a few words to enlighten the minister because, in fairness to the minister, not as a man but as a minister, he is indeed a weak minister. I do not think that is a personal abuse or a personal attack, that is just stating the facts. I think as a gentleman, he is probably one of the finer

gentlemen in this hon. House of Assembly but it is well known across the Province that he is just a weak minister.

MR. W. CARTER:

He is sitting on the backbenches.

MR. DECKER:

Yes, that is correct. Where he is sitting that is obvious they put him on the backbenches.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this bill, "An Act To Amend The Department of Environment Act" is a large, wide-ranging act that I could talk on for hours and hours but I am going to spare members opposite from a brutal attack. I am going to zero in on spraying, Mr. Speaker, because I have a fair amount of experience in this realm and I would like to share it with the minister.

I will say right off the top, Mr. Speaker, that the minister at this time has no choice. He must spray for the looper. There is no other action that he can take at this time.

I remember back in the 1950s, Mr. Speaker, the looper attacked an area up in the Strait of Belle Isle district, an area between Roddickton and Main Brook. There were hundreds of thousands of pulpwood and sawlogs in that particular area, one of the great virgin timber stands. A virgin timber stand, Mr. Speaker, in this Province was up in that particular area in the Strait of Belle Isle district.

Now the remarkable thing is that when the looper struck - did the hon. gentleman have something he wanted to say?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

No I was listening to the hon. gentleman talking about timber stands.

MR. DECKER:

The remarkable thing about when this looper attacked, Mr. Speaker, was the effect of this attack. It is almost like a forest fire, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BUTT:

The hon. member must be very boring, he is driving everyone out of the gallery.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. DECKER:

Did I say anything, Mr. Speaker, in my earlier remarks?

MR. W. CARTER:

You mentioned the word 'virgin'.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, when the looper attacks, it is devastating. I wish I could use profane language to describe this little insect. I really do. He is like a little Tory, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

When he attacks, he destroys. Everything that he latches on to is destroyed like the linerboard mill, like the Come By Chance refinery, like the various little industries all over Newfoundland that the Tories attacked. When the looper attacks, its attack is deadly. It is devastating. He comes in as a moth. He flies in. He is mobile. He flies in and he attacks the tree. Then the egg is left on that tree, Mr. Speaker. It lies dormant all Winter. With the first part of Spring, the

little Tory, the little worm, the little brutal beast comes out of his cocoon and he attacks the tree.

Before the Summer is over, Mr. Speaker, there are acres upon acres of what we in the outports call blasty boughs. The Evergreen turns red, Mr. Speaker.

DR. COLLINS:

The colour of the Liberals.

MR. DECKER:

That is a rather observant point the hon. member makes. It is the colour of the Liberals. It is red.

MR. FUREY:

Or an embarrassed Tory.

MR. DECKER:

Or an embarrassed Tory. I never thought of that before. I am sure there must be some reason for that. The tree turns red, Mr. Speaker. Now, that is year one. That particular tree is good for five years. If that tree is not harvested within five years, it is no good for pulpwood and it is no good for sawlogs. So as soon as the looper attacks, the brutal little insect, and kills the tree, then you have got to get in and salvage that timber within at least five years.

MR. FUREY:

If it is not hemlock!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, could I be protected from members on my own side of the House?

Mr. Speaker, when this looper infestation occurred in the 1950's in the Strait of Belle Isle district, the thing which experienced woods harvesters, not

necessarily foresters, some of them were, noticed most was that that was a stand of overmature timber. The sawlog in Newfoundland on the Northern Peninsula takes anywhere, under good conditions, sixty years, up to probably eighty-five or ninety years before you can harvest a sawlog up there. Pulpwood you can take in forty-five years. A lot of that timber, Mr. Speaker, which was attacked in the 1950's was over 100 years old. It was an overmature timber stand.

If you were to cut into any of those trees - and my answer is, my grandfather and my father harvested the timber - you could watch the sawdust coming from your saw. The first few cuts of the saw, whether it was a bucksaw or a power saw, the first sawdust came out was white, but within a matter of seconds the red sawdust started to come out, and this showed that the heart of the timber was rotten, it was overmature, timber that man had not harvested; man had refused to cut those trees, man allowed them to stay there, Mr. Speaker, for over 100 years. It is a fact in the land of trees as it is a fact in the land of people, that disease sets in most generally with age and as the tree gets older it weakens and it is more susceptible to all kinds of disease.

Let me be philosophical about it, Mr. Speaker. Nature is saying to Bowaters, nature is saying to Price, nature is saying to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), "If you do not harvest this timber, then, by golly, I will harvest it." Nature says that. This is what happens in the trend of things. So nature sends in the looper, nature sends in the

various diseases and attacks the overmature, weakened timber. This is what happens, Mr. Speaker.

Now, if we had an outbreak of tuberculosis and the older people were more susceptible to it and contracted tuberculosis, or measles or any disease, then the young who became exposed to the disease would catch it. So when this overmature timber is attacked by disease, which is the looper in this particular case, Mr. Speaker, the young timber in the area is also infected by the same disease. This is what has happens. Now here in microcosm - is that the word?

MR. BAKER:
Microcosm.

MR. DECKER:

There is microcosm and the opposite is macrocosm. The Strait of Belle Isle, this particular 200 or 300 acres or whatever it is in this particular little area, is a microcosm of the macrocosm, which is the whole of Newfoundland. And this is what has been happening to the way that timber has been harvested in this Province. It was allowed to overmature, become susceptible to disease, the weakened, aged timber was attacked and the young timber caught the disease. Nature cannot be as selective as man. When nature decides that this particular patch of timber has to be harvested, nature cannot be as precise, cannot take out 300,000 cords or 400,000 cords of timber that is over eighty years old, nature has to take with one swoop everything that is there. So she comes in and she destroys the old and she destroys the young.

Why does this happen, Mr. Speaker? I wish the Minister of

Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) could enlighten me on this one. I do not know what the actual figure is now, but some years ago we were importing about 75,000 or 80,000 board feet of lumber. Now, I am not talking about BC fir which we cannot grow, I am not talking about cedar which we cannot grow, I am not talking about mahogany which we cannot grow, or the green hearts which we cannot grow, or all those different species of timber which we cannot grow, I am talking about Canadian spruce and balsam fir. These two species, Mr. Speaker, grow just as well in Newfoundland as they do in Quebec, they grow just as well in Newfoundland as they do in Nova Scotia or in New Brunswick, and we are importing it. I think, and the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands might wish to advise me, we are now importing from the rest of Canada somewhere in the vicinity of 50 million feet a year. Are we importing that much now?

MR. SIMMS:
Lumber?

MR. DECKER:
Yes.

MR. SIMMS:
We are importing two-thirds of our needs, I can tell you that.

MR. DECKER:
Exactly! At least two-thirds of our needs, the minister will accept that. We are importing two-thirds of our needs, so 50 million feet would probably be a reasonable figure. We use 75 or 80 million feet of lumber in this Province.

MR. SIMMS:
Maybe 100 million feet.

MR. DECKER:

No, some of that 100 million is BC fir which we cannot grow, some of that 100 million is green heart, timber we do not have the capability of growing in this Province, and we do not have the capability of growing a certain species of pine. We have jack pine, but we do not have the mainland pine. But I would say 75 million is about what we are using in spruce and fir. Sheeting grade, to build houses, that is what I am talking about, Mr. Speaker, lumber which can be grown in Roddickton as successfully as it can be grown in Oxford, Nova Scotia.

MR. SIMMS:

What is your point?

MR. DECKER:

If the hon. member would only control himself long enough to hear what I am saying, Mr. Speaker. He always interrupts me when I am speaking. I do not know why the hon. member wants to do this. I have never in my life done anything which would offend him. If the member is going to continue to harass me, let him go back to his seat, get up and, in man fashion, call me to a point of order. If he is going to do it, let him do it do it man fashion, never mind coming in through some back door.

The minister cannot tell me whether we are importing 50 million feet of lumber or not. He cannot even challenge a figure that I am giving. He should be able to say to me, 'Look, we are importing 50 million feet.' I will say 50 million feet of lumber are being imported into this Province, lumber which has been imported during the past thirteen or fourteen years or seventeen

years that we have had this government in power. If they had tried to nurture a sawmill industry, we could today, probably, be importing less than half of what we are importing. But of neglect by the Department of Forest Resources and Lands, timber is allowed to overmature before it is harvested and then the poor, incompetent Minister of the Environment (Mr. Butt) who, heaven knows, has enough problems as it is, is compelled to come in and correct the mistakes made by the Department of Forest Resources and Lands. This is the problem, this is what has happened.

I know I am hitting the bone, I know he is leaving, but he cannot hide from the people of Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker. He cannot hide from the sawmillers out in Gambo, he cannot hide from the sawmillers across this Province who know what is happening. Do you know why, Mr. Speaker? Because the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms), like the Ministers of Forest Resources and Lands before him, is listening to Bowater, is listening to Abitibi-Price. And do you know what they would have us believe, Mr. Speaker? They have already brainwashed the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands - they would have us believe that we do not have the timber stand, that our timber is not suitable for saw logs. Now that was the stand of Bowater when they were operating. I would assume it is the stand of the Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Company, the inheritors. I am saying Bowater specifically because I have sold pulpwood to them. I have talked with their former forester, who is now retired, and their position is quite clear, they would like for every Newfoundlander to believe

that there is no potential in this Province for a lumber industry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why would Bowater or why would a pulp mill want people to believe there is no potential for sawmill operations in this Province? I would think that the question is quite obvious. Why would a horse want a cow to come and eat some of the grass? It is quite obvious. A horse would not want a cow to come in and eat his grass, and Bowater do not want any threat whatsoever to their domain. They want all the timber, and, if they cannot harvest when the time comes, they would rather see it rot, they would rather see it attacked by the loopers. They would rather see nature harvesting it than they would go in and harvest it themselves or permit the sawmill industry to do it, Mr. Speaker. This is what has happened. This is why we do not have a sawmill industry.

Mr. Speaker, some years ago, in all credit to this administration, there was some legislation passed in this hon. House which stated that when timber is harvested on Crown lands, it must be utilized in this fashion: Number one, the sawlogs must be taken out first, and the tops, the crooked stuff which is not suitable for sawlogs, could be sold for pulpwood. Now this was progressive legislation. It was not unique legislation, it was only in keeping with Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and other provinces who recognize the importance of having a sawmill industry.

Mr. Speaker, for generations Bowater when they operated - Kruger now - Abitibi Price, the AND Company, whoever it was, could go in and they could destroy the

timber. Sawlogs, which should have been made into lumber - we are importing 50,000 feet a year - was chopped up and sold for pulpwood. Consequently, Grand Falls, which uses somewhere around 300,000 cords of pulpwood a year, Corner Brook, which uses 300,000 cords of pulpwood a year, Stephenville the same, when we had in this Province all this big stand of mature timber, which is fast becoming destroyed, they could not handle it all when it was ready to be cut. They did not have the physical capability of doing it.

So what happened, Mr. Speaker? They were not subject to this sensible reasonable law. They were not made to utilize that timber. Just think of the difference in the concentration of labour in a sawmill industry as opposed to a pulpwood industry, Mr. Speaker. You take you cords of pulpwood, you carry it in and put it through your paper mill. It is labour intensive. It is becoming more and more mechanized. But how much more sensible would it have been if we had forced the proper utilization of our timber so that the sawlogs could be going into lumber and the rest could have gone to the mills for pulpwood?

If that had happened, Mr. Speaker, we would not have the problem the hon. the Minister of Environment has today, because nature would not have had to send in the loopers to attack the overmature timber. It should have been harvested in a reasonable way. The Department of Forest Resources and Lands should know, if they do not, exactly the age of timber stands in this Province. I am betting that they do. I am betting that they can tell you the

average age of timber in the Strait of Belle Isle district. I am betting they can tell you the average age of timber over in the Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir area. That is exactly what they are supposed to know, and I am saying they do.

The Department of Forest Resources and Lands should now try to head off any further attempts on the part of nature to do what man should have been doing, mainly harvesting mature timber which is on the verge of becoming sick. If this had been done, Mr. Speaker, then the Minister of Environment would not have had -

MR. DECKER:

Is the hon. gentleman trying to break in on this?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

No, no.

MR. DECKER:

He is trying to distract me, Mr. Speaker. It is extremely distracting when you get up to make a speech in this hon. House and then a man who is not the smallest man in this House, a man who is of considerable growth, considerable girth stands up. Now, if you could ask the hon. gentleman to sit down or do something, Mr. Speaker, because it is extremely distracting and I am losing my train of thought.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! I am not sure what the ruling is pertaining to an hon. member standing in his place to do certain things. I will have to check that. But the hon. member can continue his speech.

MR. DECKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. gentleman has chosen to sit down. I thank him for that, and would he

give me an undertaking not to do it again?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

No, no, I could not do that.

MR. DECKER:

It is extremely distracting, and I am going to have to threaten to stop speaking if he is going to keep it up.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! The debate is deteriorating slightly. Would the hon. member continue?

MR. DECKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, had this proper harvesting procedure been put in place, then the hon. minister would not have to spray for the looper. Their neglect and their callousness toward the sawmill industry in this Province have brought to where we are today, and there is no choice but to spray for the looper. I have to compliment the hon. Minister for Environment, because he inherited this mess which was caused by the neglect of the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands. He has no choice but to spray for the looper, and I will support him as he goes about doing it. I will caution him to make sure the winds are proper, the weather is proper, and I will be watching closely what he is doing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the budworm is a different story. The budworm is just as destructive as ever the looper was. I am not sure if the budworm disappeared from Newfoundland because of the spray programme or in spite of the spray programme.

Mr. Speaker, the egg of the

budworm is also applied to the tree by the moth, but the budworm egg is not as intelligent as the looper egg. The budworm egg comes out the first few days it gets a bit of hot sun. Knowing what the Newfoundland climate is like, it is quite possible to get two or three days of warm weather in early April. In sheltered parts of Newfoundland, the temperature can go above freezing for two or three days in the month of April. On the Avalon this is quite common, but you have no timber here worth talking about. But in Central Newfoundland, on the West Coast and up the Great Northern Peninsula, in the month of April you can get two or three days of weather which is warm enough to hatch the spruce budworm eggs.

What also happens in most Springs, after those two or three days in April we could get temperatures down to -25 below zero, you get another flat. So the stupid budworm hatches in these two or three days, when the hot sun struck them, and the following week nature steps in with Jack Frost and the stupid budworm is killed, is wiped out. Now, what happened in Newfoundland in the past few years? We had two things happen. We had spraying for the budworm.

MR. BUTT:

A successful spray, too, I might add.

MR. DECKER:

All right. This is a good point I am making. I thank the minister for interjecting here. Two things happened, we had spraying for the budworm and we had destruction, the budworm disappeared. These are two things that happened: Spraying, budworm disappeared, third thing, we had the warm

weather in April and the frost in May. These are the three things that happened. We know the budworm is destroyed. Two groups went after him, the environment went after them and nature went after them. Now, I can tell you from experience that lots of times that the environment went after them they missed them, Mr. Speaker.

I stood in Roddickton during the little bit of spraying they did for the budworm, Mr. Speaker, I saw the planes fly in the last days of the spraying programme when they had to get it all unloaded to get their money and I saw them dump loads that did not go within miles of the budworm. They sprayed the barrens out in Conche where nothing grows only a few bake apples. There was nothing there. They sprayed the barrens. They sprayed the cliff where down in the valleys you get a little bit of bog and you get the odd bake apple. That is all that grows there, Mr. Speaker. It did a darn good job on the bake apples though I will tell the hon. member that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they missed this particular area in the Strait of Belle Isle district, missed it totally! What happened? They missed the budworm in Roddickton totally. Maybe they did spray me, I do not know, maybe it had some affect on me, I hope it was a good effect if it did but maybe they did spray me as the minister said. Maybe the hon. member should have been sprayed, it could have only improved him, it could not have made him any worse, I am sure.

DR. COLLINS:

We will have some set aside for you.

MR. DECKER:

Now, Mr. Speaker, can you control that member? He is intoxicated with zeal, I notice. I am quoting Disraeli, the great parliamentarian, one of the greatest parliamentarians.

Mr. Speaker, in Roddickton area we had three things: We had the budworm, we had the spray and we had the same effect, the warm days in April and the frost in May.

What killed the budworm? Obviously, it was not the spray because I said the spray missed in that particular area and I will challenge the minister to go up and look at it. I challenge the minister to go to the area I am referring to where they missed and I know they missed, the Department of Forestry knows they missed but yet the budworm was destroyed because nature undertook to destroy it, Mr. Speaker. Now the question is this, Mr. Speaker, if, as the hon. member says, that the budworm is destroyed, and I will accept it, I hope he is right, and if nature destroyed the budworm in a section in the Strait of Belle Isle then who can take credit for destroying the budworm in Newfoundland generally, the macrocosm?

In the microcosm nature did it. Both nature and man attacked but nature destroyed because man missed. In the macrocosm, nature and man attacked the budworm. The budworm was destroyed. Who is going to take credit for it? The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Butt) is grabbing it.

Poor old nature does not have a representative in this House. If nature had some way of appointing a member here maybe that member could get up and on behalf of

nature say, 'We destroyed the budworm.' So, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member cannot boast, he can only assume, he can only conjecture because he knows one thing, that the budworm is destroyed, but he does not know that he destroyed it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member's time is almost up.

MR. DECKER:

Can I just have one minute to summarize?

MR. SPEAKER:

Yes.

MR. DECKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No, no.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, gave me a minute to summarize.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. members time has not expired. I am just advising him that he has time to wind up his speech.

MR. DECKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker is bored with my speech and he is just telling me to hurry up and I appreciate that.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, I will say this: We have no choice today but spray for the looper - that is my summary - because of the mistake by the Minister of Forestry.

may or may not have had to spray

for the budworm. What is it they say? 'Only her hairdresser knows for sure'? Nobody knows for sure. So the minister cannot get up and take credit for it. He attempted to spray for the budworm. Maybe it was a waste, maybe it was not, but when he stands up and takes full credit, let him realize that the people of Newfoundland and Labrador are not deceived. They know what nature did. I am certainly not deceived, Mr. Speaker, and I do not think Mr. Speaker is deceived either.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for yielding to me.

There are a few points, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to make respecting this bill, a bill relating to the environment and the necessity to keep our environment free from pollution, to preserve what is around us in every area of human endeavour, particularly our natural environment, to keep it as clean as possible so that not only the present generation will be able to benefit from the great natural environment that we have but it will indeed be preserved for many generations to come.

The sad part, of course, is the neglect that has gone on in years previous. I know the minister's bill is for prevention. I think there is an adage which says, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," or sixteen ounces of cure translated into the metric system, whatever that would read. The idea being, of course, that prevention is the important thing, whether we are talking about

disease, pollution or whatever.

The only observation I would have with the prevention is, first of all, wondering whether it is broad enough in terms of whether we are making exemptions always within these rules and regulations. We are never familiar with the details and the nuances until we get an actual practice. Then we find out, in actual practice, that the legislation is not doing what it was we had hoped it would do or what we anticipated it would do.

So I certainly hope that this legislation, and all of the legislation relating to liability and blame with respect to those that pollute our environment, gives the minister the power and the authority to sufficiently prevent pollution from taking place on any large scale.

The minister can correct me if I am wrong here, but my interpretation of this is that it refers in large part to municipalities. Am I correct? Does it? Anyways, the minister can allude to that. But the point I am making here is I am wondering about the wisdom of making municipalities liable because, as we know, municipalities around the Province are in a bankrupt position now. If we are to levy a fine of \$25,000, for example, on a municipality, is that being practical, is it being reasonable, is it being logical?

MR. W. CARTER:

What will it do to their insurance?

MR. LUSH:

Yes, and what it will do to their insurance. It will obviously up their cost in terms of insurance. I think the minister can appreciate that even during the

normal routine of running a council, that I am sure he is familiar with, and I am sure he gets it all day long about councils needing emergency funds to allow them to carry on to finish the year without the council going into a bankruptcy situation or not being able to carry out the planned activity for that particular fiscal year.

So I am wondering what the implications of that might be. I am wondering why we arrived at that figures of \$25,000, whether it might not have been better to have a lesser figure, one that was more within the range maybe that would not affect them the way it looks like it might here or drive up their insurance. Because that is one thing for sure, it is certainly going to affect the insurance of municipalities, and then what is going to happen is we are going to, I am sure, getting get requests from council for extra money to take care of that insurance.

I am just wondering whether we are not creating a large elephant for ourselves in terms of the amount of the levy. But there is no question that we all have to agree that certain preventive measures have to be taken, and when we do that we have to certainly ensure that, one, the legislation is all encompassing, that there are no exceptions to companies or individuals, and that it applies equally to all groups, companies, individuals and the like. So that is the only caution, Mr. Speaker, that I would have, and my only concern is with respect to what kind of responsibility in terms of increasing the cost to councils would this bill result in, so I would like for the minister certainly to address that.

But on another matter relating to the environment, Mr. Speaker, I talked about prevention, and that is certainly a step that we have to take, prevention. But all the more significant, and all the more important at this particular point in time is cure. You know, our environment is in a mess. I am talking about our landscape. It is in a terrible mess. Just take a glimpse for the moment at the Trans-Canada Highway. I am always so disappointed and so disconcerted, and these are understatements, when I ride the Trans-Canada and see the litter that is on the Trans-Canada Highway, bottles of every kind, cans of every kind, and all kinds of Colonel Sanders chicken boxes and Mary Browns chicken boxes, and you name it, Mr. Speaker. The Trans-Canada Highway is littered with confetti and all kinds of disposable items and it is a terrible indictment on the Province. I wonder what kind of impression other Canadians get who normally take more care in terms of keeping their environment clean when they see every kind of litter a person can name on the Trans-Canada Highway. My suggestion, without treating this matter lightly, Mr. Speaker, if we are concerned - I was going to say promoting tourism but that is a secondary point - with keeping our environment clean, if we are concerned with having a Province that we are proud of, a landscape that we are proud of, then I believe there is an onus on government to see what they can do in terms of promoting this kind of activity and encouraging it and enforcing that our people keep our landscape clean and free of the confetti and the obstacles and the castaway items and articles that I have been referring to.

One of the things that I find in this Province, is that there is no provision on our highways for people to cast away these things in. Just about every other Province in Canada, at intervals along the Trans-Canada, have trash cans, or whatever we refer to them as. I find that we do not have these kinds of facilities in the Province. We may have a few but they are not close enough together. We are lacking in signs to indicate where these the areas are. I may be wrong, but the only area I know of, between here and my district, on the Trans-Canada, that is, is an area in Clarendville called the Lookout. That is the only place that I can name at the moment. I find myself, for example, when I get my car loaded, stopping off at a garage and putting it in the trash cans at the gas pumps. Now I do believe that if we want to encourage keeping our highway clean we should have these trash cans, or whatever the correct terminology might be, at proper intervals and well advertised.

MR. BUTT:

Collectors, they are called.

MR. LUSH:

Right. And we should have a system of collection in place for these areas, because they can become littered if they are not looked after properly.

Now, having said that, what do we do with what is already there? Is there in place anywhere within the provincial government monies allocated for the cleanup of the Trans-Canada Highway, for the cleanup of this trash and this litter that is strewn from here to Port aux Basques? Now that certainly would create some jobs for young people, if we could have

them employed now to clean up the mess, do the things that I have been talking about in terms of having proper disposal areas, spaced at reasonable intervals, see that they are kept clean and clean up what is now there. I am sure that that could create I do not know how many jobs, but just as a conservative guess I say that we could immediately create 100 jobs from here to Port aux Basques to provide students with jobs during the Summer.

MR. W. CARTER:

More than that.

MR. LUSH:

Yes, I am saying this is a rather conservative number, I am sure. But that is something that certainly would be a good job creation programme for students and I am wondering if some department of government cannot find funds to do that kind of thing. Because if we do not clean it up, there is going to be no necessity to keep it clean. I forget the catchy phrase that I would be looking for, but dirt and filth encourages dirt and filth. If we do not clean it up, then there seems to be no inclination to keep it clean. It is like your house; when it gets messy you have a tendency to add to it rather than to make sure that it is cleaned up.

So, Mr. Speaker, I certainly hope that the minister would certainly look into this area and see if we cannot do something. Quite apart from the fact of cleaning it up now we have two or three results, one, of course, of creating jobs for young people, badly needed jobs at this particular point in time; and, number two, it would cause the environment to be cleaned up, particularly the

Trans-Canada and secondary roads as well, and every major road system. Until we do that I do not think we can hope to ensure that our people will become conscious of the notion of keeping the landscape clean and looking the way that nature meant for it to look, keep it in its natural state. If the government does nothing else, Mr. Speaker, in terms of reacting to the environment but would carry out just that suggestion, I believe that it would be a noble effort and demonstrate to our people that our government indeed now is not just giving lip service to this notion of keeping the environment clean but, indeed, would have demonstrated in a tangible way that they are serious about keeping our landscape clean.

The other observation, Mr. Speaker, that I have is with respect to waste disposal areas. I am just wondering what the situation on that is in terms of where they are located. It seems to me that our waste disposal areas have not been located in the proper areas. Now, again, take a drive on the Trans-Canada Highway and there are four or five places where, when the wind is blowing in the right direction, that a person almost has to turn back.

MR. SIMMS:

That is an awful thing for the member to say.

MR. LUSH:

I said I do not know what the regulations are in terms of where they should be located. But it seems to me, from my observation, they are located in the wrong places, too close to the Trans-Canada. Without naming areas, I am sure I do not have to do that, hon. members know the

areas that I am talking about. When you are driving through you have to put your hand to your nose and you wonder what you are going in, and there are - I hope the minister is listening; and I know there are a lot of other members not listening but again - between St. John's and Gambo at least three or four large waste disposal areas and they must be within hundreds of feet of the Trans-Canada because, as I have said, when the wind is blowing in the right direction it is almost poisonous to drive through. Again, I do not know. Maybe if they were located miles away we would still get that, but I do not believe so because there are two or three areas of the Trans-Canada where you get it constantly. So, that again must be a terrible thing to tourists when they are driving the Trans-Canada, trying to get the clean fresh air of Newfoundland, only to run into that stench and that poisonous odour.

MR. BUTT:

Is there not one around Gambo, or just past Gambo?

MR. LUSH:

Yes. Again, I think the minister could look at this, there is one in Terra Nova National Park. Now I believe that one is built to the latest specifications and whatever. I have never noticed that one. But maybe that is something to look into.

MR. MARSHALL:

Would the member like to adjourn the debate?

MR. LUSH:

I will just finish on that.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a trivial point, it is something that I have

heard observations on and complaints, if you will, from other people about the location of waste disposal sites too close to the Trans-Canada, and of course at this time of the year you can see them. Now in the Summer when we get the lush growth you cannot observe it. By the same token, neither can you observe the confetti and other castaway items on the Trans-Canada Highway when this lush growth comes through. Lush growth is tremendous, but we do not get a lot of that lush growth, Mr. Speaker. We are unfortunate enough to get a lot of blight and that makes it more important for us to ensure that our environment is as manicured, if that is the right word, as possible. These are a few items that I would like the minister to certainly take under advisement and to take before his colleagues, to see if we cannot correct that situation.

The other point I want to make crystal clear is maybe it is the kind of systems that we have in place because, again, I have not observed it but now that I have alerted hon. members to it they can test it out themselves, but I do not believe that you get that kind of poisonous odour from the Terra Nova National Park waste disposal area because that is built to the latest specifications, whatever they might be, for waste disposal areas. Now, I could be incorrect. If I am correct that the Terra Nova one is indeed the type of waste disposal area that eliminates smell and whatever else, unpleasantries, maybe we should require the same things for the other waste disposal areas.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if it is appropriate I certainly move the

adjournment of the debate.

MR. MARSHALL:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL:
An outstanding speech, I want to compliment the hon. member, it really was and I look forward to it being continued next Thursday.

Before I adjourn the House, Mr. Speaker, I want to advise the House that on Monday, April 28, the Resource Committee will meet at 9:30 in the House to continue its review of the estimates of the Department of Development. At 9:30 at the Colonial Building, the Social Services Committee will meet to review the estimates of the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies. At 7:30 that night in the House the Government Services Committee will conclude its estimates of the Department of Finance and begin its review of the estimates of the Department of Labour.

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

On motion the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Monday, April 29, at 3:00 p.m.

Index

Answers to Questions

tabled

April 25, 1986

*Tabled by the Hon. the
Premier, 25 Apr. '86*

EXCERPT FROM "LEAP OF FAITH" BY ROD MCQUEEN

Free trade with the U.S.

In recent years, while attempting to achieve closer trade ties with Europe, Canada has actually been drifting closer to the U.S. Journalist Anthony Westell has urged a more deliberate integration. Writes Westell: "The basic argument being made here is that Canadians, both as individuals and as a political nation, are more likely to prosper and fulfill themselves in free association with Americans than they are by seeking to protect themselves from U.S. competition and influence. The desire to escape from U.S. influence, the desire to put distance between Canada and the United States, arises in large measure from fear of absorption by the U.S. and from jealousy of U.S. wealth, power and vitality. But fear and jealousy are corrosive in national as in personal life; they feed the Canadian sense of inferiority, encourage parochial attitudes, and give rise in politics to nationalist policies that are bound to fail because they are against the tide of events and against the private aspirations of most Canadians who wish to enjoy the maximum freedom to trade, invest, travel and exchange ideas."

Canada needs the United States; in turn, the Americans need us. Canada is not only the best customer for the U.S., Canada is also its principal supplier. While proximity to the U.S. provides much of our wealth, it also makes us vulnerable. While links with other nations are one course to end vulnerability, so are closer ties.

If Canada is to have free trade with the U.S., it must mean more than the removal of tariffs because there are other noteworthy

barriers as well. Free trade with the U.S. is not just the absence of all barriers between the two countries but is an instrument to increase and assure access to each other's markets.

Free trade does not mean a customs union. Such an arrangement would require the adoption of a common external tariff against other countries. Nor does free trade mean a common market. A common market goes even further than a customs union and would require a degree of economic integration unlikely to be acceptable to Canadians. As for the difference between free trade and freer trade, that is sterile debate. The phrases should be used interchangeably; it is the result that is relevant, not the label.

The historic protection of the National Policy has left Canada with an inefficient manufacturing base. There is too little product specialization and there are too many branch plants. One sector's response was the 1965 Canada-U.S. Auto Pact, a trade agreement that promoted longer production runs and greater product specialization in Canada. That pact, along with sharply increased investment by U.S. multinationals in Canada, produced a more than twenty-fold increase in Canadian auto exports from 1965 to the present, not to mention cheaper automobiles for Canadians.

Free trade would offer several advantages. Trade would grow because reduced tariffs would mean lower prices, thus causing higher sales in the U.S. In addition, the increased volume and secure access would lead to larger operations in Canada. Canadians could specialize in areas of greatest competence, resulting in significantly lower production costs. There would be an improvement in overall productivity. As well, living standards would rise through increased wages and lower costs. By becoming more competitive against U.S. firms, Canadian manufacturers would also become better able to survive in the global trading environment. Only by creating a more competitive domestic economy can Canada hope to produce the additional jobs needed to reduce unemployment.

OPPORTUNITIES IN AN OPEN WORLD

There appears to be substantial public support for free trade with the United States, and there are tactical arguments in favour of negotiating bilaterally now. First, a liberalizing agenda will help stem the tide of protectionism in Congress. Second, such action is likely to speed up multilateral negotiations toward liberalization with our other trading partners. This was clearly the case in the 1960s when the so-called Dillon Round of talks was accelerated by the formation of the European Community. With the creation of the EC, the Americans realized that they would need to negotiate.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the major benefit from negotiating bilaterally with the U.S. is the potential, dynamic jolt that this would give the Canadian economy. With competition coming from Asia and the Pacific Rim nations, it is clear that Canada cannot face head-on competition from the Americans, we will surely lose out to the even tougher competition growing in Asia.

There have been several studies into the quantitative impact of free trade on Canada. While the precise results vary, every major study has predicted positive results for Canada. Everyone agrees that Canada will gain, the only question is: by how much? The best estimate is that the gross national product would grow by an additional four to eight per cent over the next ten years. This would be worth from \$12 to \$24 billion to the Canadian economy or up to \$4,000 for the average Canadian family.

*Tabled by the Hon. the
Premier, 25 Apr. '86*

QUESTION:

Why the increase in fatalities in 1985 compared to 1984.

NOTE:

The chart on page 26 of the Annual Report is not quite accurate. There should have been a footnote explaining that the number of fatalities shown for 1985 included deaths as a result of industrial disease, whereas for 1984 and prior years industrial disease deaths are not included.

Actual stats: -

	<u>1985</u>	<u>1984</u>
- Deaths from Industrial Disease (mostly St. Lawrence Miners)	7	13
- Drownings - fishing industry	10	7
- Other drownings	2	2
- Plane crash	5	4
- Other traumatic incidents	<u>13</u>	<u>10</u>
TOTAL -	<u>37</u>	<u>36</u>

Comparison shows a decrease in industrial disease deaths, from 13 to 7 - but an increase in deaths due to trauma, from 23 to 30.

Workers' Compensation Commission is not able to explain or give any reasons for the increase in fatalities due to trauma. It's possible that the Occupational Health and Safety Division may be able to provide a more in-depth analysis.

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First Session - Fortieth General Assembly

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Hon. P.J.McNicholas, Speaker

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Butt, Hon. John (PC)	Conception Bay South
Callan, Wilson (Lib)	Bellevue
Carter, John A. (PC)	St. John's North
Carter, Walter C. (Lib)	Twillingate
Collins, Hon. John F. (PC)	St. John's South
Dawe, Hon. Ron (PC)	St. George's
Decker, Chris (Lib)	Strait of Belle Isle
Dinn, Jerome W. (PC)	Pleasantville
Doyle, Norman E. (PC)	Harbour Main
Efford, John (Lib)	Port de Grave
Fenwick, Peter (NDP)	Menihek
Flight, Graham (Lib)	Windsor-Buchans
Furey, Chuck (Lib)	St. Barbe
Gilbert, Dave (Lib)	Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir
Greening, Glenn C. (PC)	Terra Nova
Hearn, Hon. Loyola (PC)	St. Mary's-The Capes
Hickey, Thomas V. (PC)	St. John's East Extern
Hiscock, R. Eugene (Lib)	Eagle River
Hodder, James E. (PC)	Port au Port
Kelland, Jim (Lib)	Naskaupi
Lush, Tom (Lib)	Bonavista North

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
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<u>Member</u>	<u>District</u>
Marshall, Hon. William (PC)	St. John's East
Matthews, Hon. William (PC)	Grand Bank
McNicholas, Hon. Dr. P.J. (PC)	St. John's Centre
Mitchell, Calvin (PC)	LaPoile
Morgan, James (PC)	Bonavista South
Ottenheimer, Hon. Gerald R. (PC)	Waterford - Kenmount
Patterson, William G. (PC)	Placentia
Peach, Milton (PC)	Carbonear
Peckford, A. Brian, P.C. (PC) (Premier)	Green Bay
Power, Hon. Charlie (PC)	Ferryland
Reid, James G. (PC)	Trinity - Bay de Verde
Rideout, Hon. Thomas G. (PC)	Baie Verte - White Bay
Russell, Hon. Maxwell James (PC)	Lewisporte
Simms, Hon. Len (PC)	Grand Falls
Simmons, Hon. Roger P.C. (Lib)	Fortune-Hermitage
Tobin, Glenn (PC)	Burin - Placentia West
Tulk, R. Beaton (Lib)	Fogo
Twomey, Hon. Dr. Hugh Matthew (PC)	Exploits
Verge, Hon. Lynn (PC)	Humber East
Warren, Garfield E. (PC)	Torngat Mountains
Windsor, Hon. H. Neil (PC)	Mount Pearl
Woodford, Rick (PC)	Humber Valley
Young, Hon. Haig (PC)	Harbour Grace

THE MINISTRY - LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
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Hon. A. Brian Peckford, P.C.	Premier
Hon. Robert J. Aylward	Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development
Hon. Harold Barrett	Development and Tourism
Hon. Ted A. Blanchard	Labour
Hon. Charlie Brett	Social Services
Hon. John Butt	Environment
Dr. The Hon. John F. Collins	Finance
Hon. Ron Dawe	Transportation
Hon. Jerome W. Dinn	Mines and Energy
Hon. Norman E. Doyle	Municipal Affairs
Hon. William Marshall	President of the Council/ Government House Leader/ Minister responsible for Energy, Petroleum Directorate/Nfld. and Labrador Hydro

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Hon. William Matthews	Culture, Recreation and Youth
Hon. Gerald R. Ottenheimer	Intergovernmental Affairs
Hon. Charlie Power	Career Development and Advanced Studies
Hon. Thomas G. Rideout	Fisheries
Hon. Maxwell J. Russell	Consumer Affairs and Communications
Hon. Len Simms	Forest Resources and Lands
Dr. The Hon. Hugh M. Twomey	Health
Hon. Lynn Verge	Justice
Hon. H. Neil Windsor	President of Treasury Board
Hon. Haig Young	Public Works and Services