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Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

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The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

I have checked Hansard of yesterday and I note referring to the hon. member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons), the hon. the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) said, "Why, if he is going to lie I may as well at least tell someone that he is lying." That is unparliamentary and I call on the hon. member to withdraw that statement.

MR. FENWICK:
Talk about frustration, Mr. Speaker. I normally would love to make that statement stand because I think it is true.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I asked the hon. member to withdraw that statement without equivocation, and I do not want a speech or any explanation.

The hon. the member for Menihek.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Come on! Come on!

MR. TULK:
Take your time.

MR. FENWICK:
That a temptation!

MR. MORGAN:
Come one. Do not be so childish.

MR. FENWICK:
Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do want to take part in the debate this afternoon, so I withdraw those comments.

MR. SPEAKER:
At this stage, I would like to

rule on the point of privilege raised last Thursday by the Honourable Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

In his submission, the Honourable Member for Fortune - Hermitage alleges that the Honourable Minister of Public Works and Services knowingly gave false information to this House.

The issue arose as a result of the questions put to the Minister by the Member for Fogo concerning the hiring practices of the Minister's department. The Member for Fogo also tabled a copy of a memorandum which, it is alleged, demonstrates the untruthfulness of the Minister's answers to this House. Reference was also made to questions put to the Minister on June 5th of last year. I note as well that questions were raised on succeeding days by various members of the Opposition and several Points of Privilege in connection with the Minister's answers to those questions were raised by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry). I refer hon. members to Hansard of June 5th, 6th, 11th, and 12th, 1986. I ruled on those Points of Privilege on June 13th, 1986.

My ruling of that date is relevant to the Point of Privilege presently before me but before referring to it I would like to make a number of comments of a more general nature.

I believe the matter raised by the Honourable Member for Fortune - Hermitage is a serious one and I have taken some time to carefully study the issues in this case. At the outside, I should say that this matter has given the Chair a great deal of concern.

It has been said many times by many Speakers but I believe it is worth re-iterating that a member's rising on a question of Privilege is a very serious matter. According to Beauchesne, 5th ed. paragraph 17, "a general question of privilege is a most serious matter and should be taken seriously by the House".

It is also a well known aspect of the law of privilege that "a question of privilege must be brought to the attention of the House at the first possible opportunity. Even a gap of a few days may invalidate the claim for precedence in the House." That is Beauchesne 5th ed. paragraph 82. Although I do not rule against the Point of Privilege raised by the Honourable Member for Fortune - Hermitage on that basis it is my opinion that this matter could have been raised earlier in this Session; as early as the first regular sitting day on March 2nd. It should be noted that the information tabled by the Honourable member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) was received by the Office of the Leader of the Opposition on August 13th, 1986.

In preparing my ruling on this matter I have again examined the relevant Hansards from June of last year as well as carefully studying Hansard for March 12th of this year. I think all the Hansards as noted should be taken as one in the examination of this issue.

I conclude from my review of Hansard that there is no material difference in the substance of the points of Privilege raised by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition last June and the Honourable Member for Fortune - Hermitage last Thursday. I note

that the contents of the memo tabled by the Member for Fogo were substantially provided to the House by the former Government House Leader on June 11, 1986. (Hansard of June 11th, 1986 pages R2985 - L2986.)

I rule that the Honourable Member for Fortune - Hermitage has not proceeded properly in rising on a point of privilege in this matter. I quote for the benefit of all Honourable Members from my ruling of June 13, 1986. I said at that time:

'I do not know whether the statements made by the Honourable the Minister of Public Works and Services are in fact untrue. However, it is not the role of the Speaker to determine the truth or falsity of a member's statements to this House. It is incumbent upon a member making allegations of that nature to proceed, not by way of a point of privilege, but rather by way of a substantive motion of which notice must first be given.'

For authority for that statement I refer Honourable Members to the work Parliamentary Privilege in Canada by Joseph Maingot, pages 205 - 206, and I will read them: 'To allege that a member has misled the House is a matter of order rather than privilege and is not unparliamentary, whether or not it is qualified by the adjective "unintentionally" or "inadvertently." To allege that a member has deliberately misled the House is also a matter of "order," and is indeed unparliamentary. However, deliberately misleading statements may be treated as contempt. In the Canadian House of Commons, however, members attempt to get such matters before the House on a "question of

privilege" when there is merely an allegation of contempt rather than an admitted matter (such as in the Profumo case), and the problem arises because the use of unparliamentary language is not permitted in the House and therefore questions of privilege and motions in support must be purged of such language.

'If the conduct of a member is to be formally discussed or debated in the House of Commons, such as a charge of deliberately misleading the House, it cannot be done on a "question of privilege" because until admitted, or, so found by the House, such allegations are unparliamentary and cannot be uttered and the fact that the accused member denies it is irrelevant. As was said in the U.K. House of Commons in 1965,

'If you wish to make an abusive accusation about the conduct of another Hon. Member, you should argue the matter by tabling a substantive motion to enable you to do it. In other circumstances, it would not be in order.

'The conduct of a member may only be discussed in the House of Commons by way of a substantive or distinct motion, i.e., a self-contained proposal submitted for the approval of the House and drafted in such a way as to be capable of expressing a decision of the House. Such a motion may contain the "abusive accusation" that would otherwise be unparliamentary language.'

Statements by Ministers

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to announce some preliminary results of initiatives undertaken by my department in the area of product research and development. Resulting from the implementation of a secondary processing and by-product development programme announced in this House last April, a number of benefits have resulted within the processing sector. These benefits include: (1) extended operating times for some fish plants; (2) improved employment opportunities in the processing sector; (3) technological transfer and skill development; (4) increased production and diversification of value added products; (5) increased use of underutilized species; and (6) improved value from traditional species.

Mr. Speaker, this programme has four major components: First, financial incentives; secondly, technical assistance; third, the transfer of information; and fourth, research and development.

The first component, financial assistance, is designed not only to provide an incentive to industry to participate in secondary processing and by-product development, but also to assist industry in research and development.

Since May of last year, eleven projects have commenced as a result of applications made by industry under this programme. These projects are diversified in their types of products, their

processes and the target markets. Both the number and range of activities illustrate the opportunities available in the area of secondary processing and by-product utilization, as well as the interest in developing these products throughout the Province.

As a second component, Mr. Speaker, the department provides industry with assistance in the identification, purchase and application of innovative technology. This technical market related component of the programme encompasses product and market identification, as well as market and promotion planning.

The third major component pertains to the transfer of information. This component, Mr. Speaker, assists industry to identify and access financial, technical and procedural assistance in secondary processing and by-product utilization. This assistance acts as a time saving approach with regard to the identification of appropriate government departments, agencies, educational institutions or other organizations to which companies can turn for assistance.

Mr. Speaker, the final component of this programme is the department's direct research and development activities. These activities, generated both by industry and government are designed to identify, research and develop new product ideas. In turn, the results of this research are transferred to industry. A key principle guiding the department's research and development activities is the use of an integrated approach to product development. This involves the application of expertise from government,

industry and educational institutions in the research effort.

As mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, my department has implemented eleven projects under this programme as a result of industry proposals. The following is a list of these projects and their associated companies: Atlantic Oceans Farms Limited, Fortune Harbour, mussel marinating line; Aquatic Foods Limited, Holyrood, dried caplin products; Aquatic Foods Limited, Holyrood, fish sauce utilizing male caplin; Eastern Ocean Products Limited, Lewisporte, four new seafood entrees; Kennedy Export Limited, Marysvale, vacuum packed salt cod fillets; P. Janes and Sons Limited, Hants Harbour, cod in sauce products; J. W. Hiscock and Sons Limited, Winterhouse Brook, Bonne Bay, new salt fish products; Fogo Island Co-op, Fogo Island, marinated fish products; Fogo Island Co-op, Fogo Island, laboratory development study; Bayside Seafoods Limited, Frenchman's Cove, two new seafood entrees; and Calvert Food Processors Limited, Calvert, secondary processing facility.

Mr. Speaker, in the areas of department product research and development, several projects have recently been completed or are presently ongoing. These research efforts include:

1. SURIME RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

My department has contributed \$105,000 towards the research and development of surimi based products and associated processing technology. This project has been a joint effort between my department, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Marine

Institute, Memorial University and the industry. The focus of this research has been the utilization of presently underutilized species and fish waste for the production of surimi based products on a cost competitive basis.

2. SALT FISH PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Fisheries has contributed \$30,000 towards the development of new secondary processed salt fish products. This project, a combined effort between the Canadian Salfish Corporation, the Marine Institute, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and my department, is designed to enhance salt fish production through the development of value added products from lower grade raw material.

3. COD ROE/COD LIVER RESEARCH

During the past year, my department has conducted preliminary research into the quantity, quality and suitability of cod roe and cod liver for commercial production. To date, the research effort is concentrated on the Port aux Basques Winter fishery and on the Summer fishery on the Northeast Coast. As preliminary information is evaluated, our research will be expanded to other areas of the Province. The department also plans to investigate the feasibility of producing canned cod liver for the European market. Specific research will be aimed at raw material transportation and storage requirements.

4. LUMPROE PROCESSING AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Speaker, my department is

actively pursuing opportunities and processing requirements for the production of lumproe into consumer products. Working in conjunction with the marine institute, the department is developing the necessary expertise in this area. As a component of this project, market research is being carried out to guide the product and process research activities.

5. INSTITUTIONAL PRODUCT PACKAGE DEVELOPMENT

In an attempt to expand the market available to secondary products, the department, with direct input from the industry, is developing an institutional product package. Such a package is targeted specifically towards institutions such as schools, hospitals, senior citizens homes and hotels. The department has assessed the product in the Newfoundland market, and is presently assessing it in the Ontario marketplace.

6. SPECIALTY SALT FISH PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT - MAKKOVIK

Mr. Speaker, my department has recently completed a project in Makkovik, Labrador. This project was aimed at the development of value-added salt fish products, specifically filletoni and whole pickled salt fish for the Italian market. As results of this study become available through market response, this research and development will be expanded appropriately. Initial comments from inspectors of the Canadian Salfish Corporation and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans indicate that so far the products have been of excellent quality.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that through direct

and indirect research and development activities - at a cost of approximately \$250,000 - the Department of Fisheries is making significant steps in the area of product development through secondary processing and by-product utilization.

The department has responded to industry needs in this area, namely through financial and technical assistance and through the transfer of information. If we are to gauge the success of this programme on the number, type and range of proposals, then I believe we can look forward to a high degree of success. As I mentioned earlier, several benefits have already developed within the processing industry. From an employment perspective alone, Mr. Speaker, preliminary information indicates that over 100 new positions have been created in the processing sector as a result of this activity.

It is evident, Mr. Speaker, that like government, industry is not only aware of and interested in addressing the challenges of the international marketplace, but is capable of meeting those challenges head on. It is this government's policy to maximize the economic and social benefits available in the processing sector and to work closely with industry, educational institutions, as well as with other government departments and agencies to achieve these benefits through the maximum utilization of our most precious resource.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I compliment the minister on the initiatives taken by him as outlined in this paper. I am sure that all Newfoundlanders will welcome more emphasis being placed on secondary processing by the government sector and, of course, by the private sector as well. But I do not think the minister should relax or rest on his laurels because it is quite obvious, Mr. Speaker, that a lot more needs to be done and a lot more can be done in terms of secondary processing in the fishing industry.

I am led to believe, Mr. Speaker, that one of the problems being encountered by a lot of secondary processors, especially those processors who are involved in the salt fish processing sector, arises from the fact that harvesting licences are not available for people who want to involve themselves in secondary processing. I think the minister knows what I am talking about; he and I have already discussed it. For example, people who have developed new techniques in the specialized packaging of salt fish, I am told that one of the big impediments they must overcome has to do with how they get the raw material. I believe at the present time they have to buy their raw material at, in some cases, prohibitive prices from existing plants. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the minister has some plans to bring about some changes in that particular area and I would urge him to take the necessary action, to introduce the

necessary legislation, if in fact, legislation is necessary, to change the licensing regulations to enable people who are involved in the secondary processing of fish to become more competitive and more effective.

I was happy to see in the minister's statement that he is now putting some emphasis on the further development of lumproe and cod liver. That, to me, seems to be a good idea. Lumproe, on parts of the Northeast Coast, is a very important by-product, I suppose you would call it, in the fishery and, it seems to me, that rather than shipping this stuff out in big fifty gallon or fifty pound drums -

MR. RIDEOUT:

One hundred pound drums.

MR. W. CARTER:

- one hundred pound drums, yes - surely there is something that can be done to further refine that product and thereby provide jobs. In fact, I have had discussions with a certain fish plant owner on the Northeast Coast of the Province who told me that at one point in time there was a lot of interest being shown - I believe by an American company - in taking lumproe and instead of shipping it out in one hundred pound drums developing it into caviar which, I think, is the end product that results from lumproe. This gentleman told me that such an operation would have the effect of employing, in that particular case, probably fifty to seventy-five people.

Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious that that is the way we have to go, but I think the minister will have to agree that it is not enough just to concentrate on some

of the smaller items in a small way. I think we have to start looking at ways and means of secondary processing of cod fish, for example. These are the big sources of employment in the Province. I have a fish plant in my district, in fact I have three or four fish plants in my district, large fish plants that are quite capable of almost year round production in terms of the physical aspects of the plant, yet these plants are operating at probably less than 40 per cent of their actual operating capacity.

Certainly, on the Northeast Coast where you have to cope with the seasonality of the inshore fishery it follows that ways and means must be found to provide raw material to these plants to keep them operating for a much longer period. I suppose this is one of the big curses of the inshore fishery in this Province, both in the harvesting and the processing sectors, where huge capital investments are undertaken in building large plants that operate only at a very small portion of their actual operating capability.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see to in this statement that some action is being taken and some encouragement is being given by the department to the production of salt fish. I am happy, as well, to find that the Canadian Saltfish Corporation appears to be relaxing their grip on that sector of the fishery.

For example, I believe when they came to the Province, in the early 1970's, they had exclusive rights to do whatever had to be done with salt fish, from the harvesting to the marketing. But I understand they are now loosening their grip on the salt fish industry, whereby

people are allowed and encouraged to get involved in the final processing.

I believe there is a young gentleman named Kennedy - I notice it is in the minister's statement, Kennedy Exports - who is putting out a pickled fillet, I think it is, and I am told it is an excellent product.

MR. BARRY:

But he does not have a license, therefore he cannot get the raw material.

MR. W. CARTER:

He does not have the license. I alluded to that, Mr. Speaker, a moment ago.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, may I say that appears to be that gentleman's big problem, he is not able to buy the raw material at a price that would make his product competitive. Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout) for giving me a copy of his statement. Personally, I think this is an extremely important initiative on the part of the provincial government. As a

matter of fact, I would argue that if we are looking at long term job creation, secondary processing in the fishing industry is probably our best bet. I do not think there is anything we can possibly look at that will be more important than that.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, it does point up a big hypocrisy on the part of this government, however. We have probably the best engine for producing secondary processed fish of all, in the case of Fishery Products International. It is a large corporation, and it has the marketing expertise to sell this product all over the world. Indeed, since it has been established in the town of Burin, it has established a secondary processing operation which has been tremendously successful and which points the way to where we should go. Yet, this government opposite has decided to sell it to foreigners outside of Newfoundland so that 85 per cent of the control will be gone from us. Mr. Speaker, although this is an indication of the right direction in which to go, the other policies followed by this government show that they are slaves to ideology and they refuse to use the major engine we have in order to get things done. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Before recognizing the hon. the Minister of Health, I would like to welcome to the galleries Mayor Sean Power of Buchans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. TWOMEY:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise hon. members that the Newfoundland Medical Care Commission (MCP) and the Newfoundland Medical Association have concluded a three-year arrangement covering payments to fee-for-service physicians in the Province. The arrangement will be with effect from November 1, 1986.

The arrangement will result in average increases of approximately 6 per cent in medical fee payments in each of the three years. Most groups will receive less than 6 per cent. Some specialties will receive more to address basic inequities in the relativity between specialty incomes in order to aid retention and recruitment. There will also be an amount equal to 1 per cent of the medicare fund provided to deal with special problems such as the inordinate increases in malpractice insurance rates for certain physicians who provide services which are considered to be in a higher risk category.

Since I have been Minister, a number of individuals and organizations, including Members of this House, have raised with me the need to improve Newfoundland's fee schedule to make it more competitive with other provinces with whom we are competing in the marketplace. In the current fiscal environment, we have attempted to do that, but it can only be achieved over a period of time recognizing that, while our fees may be lower in relative terms (we have the second lowest fee schedule in Canada),

physicians' incomes, when compared with incomes in Newfoundland generally, are relatively high.

During this set of negotiations, our objective has been not to pay out uniform "across the board" increases to all physicians but rather to deal with problem areas. While the process is one of negotiation and there has to be some flexibility, we believe we have made important progress in dealing with some of the problems and anomalies. We also feel the Newfoundland Medical Association has recognized the desirability of this approach and has consequently agreed to apply a considerable portion of the increases where they will have the most benefit.

Mr. Speaker, the gross percentage increases are in line with other employee groups although the overhead component will, no doubt, render less in terms of "take home" percentage increases. Nevertheless, considering physicians' incomes, within the Newfoundland context, and considering the Province's fiscal position, I believe the increases are reasonable and will help deal with some of the manpower problems.

Mr. Speaker, if I could sum up the philosophy of the arrangement, I would say it is a major move to get away from simple "across the board" percentage increases to a more imaginative approach with selective increases to deal with the problems of the system. After all, if we do not try to deal with these problems now, they will be more difficult to deal with in the future. I have said before, and I will say again, that we have made considerable improvements in our medical manpower situation over the past few years. Despite reductions in the growth of

federal transfer payments, we have struggled to maintain a good health care system, and collectively we have done a good job despite the occasional anecdotal accounts of problems. It bears repeating that the problems of maintaining a good supply of specialists in the Province go beyond the fee schedule alone. They are a function of a variety of other factors that cannot be oversimplified. Nevertheless, I am happy to say that we have more specialists in the Province today than ever before.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this arrangement entered into with the Medical Association is a reasonable attempt to further improve the attractiveness of the medical system in Newfoundland, particularly with regard to specialists.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, is this place turning into a mad house? What is going on here?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. DECKER:

There must be someone who can

control these fellows.

Mr. Speaker, basically this statement released by the hon. minister announces an increase in pay for the doctors of this Province. Now, I would hope that this step is a step which will stop the exodus of doctors from Newfoundland to other parts of North America. This recognizes that we do have a problem with health care within this Province. Over the past few years, health care has taken a tremendous beating. I do not believe that the freeze on health services, the freeze which was put on and which still is on in the city, could have been administered without taking a very serious smack at health care in this Province. I believe that the doctors need an increase. It is all very well to compare their salaries with the salaries of other people in Newfoundland, but compared to doctors across the nation, as the statement points out, we have the second lowest paid doctors in the nation, and we have to recognize that if we are going to keep them we have to pay them.

Health care in this Province, Mr. Speaker, is taking the biggest beating, I believe, in what is referred to as elective surgery. Now, if there is an automobile accident and a person finds that he is an extremely serious case, if it is an emergency, I would suggest that he can get as good a treatment in Newfoundland as he could anywhere else in the nation. But elective surgery is the problem. The word 'elective' tends to throw off a lot of people because we think of face lifts, we think of cosmetic surgery. Elective surgery, Mr. Speaker, in some cases could include a back problem which is not life

threatening but is job threatening. There are people out there, Mr. Speaker, who have been on waiting lists for as high as eighteen months, waiting to see a specialist because they have a back problem. Now, these are some of the things which are happening in health care in this Province.

I believe the hon. the minister has to recognize that Newfoundland is unable to afford the health care that is required, and I do not believe that the Department of Health put up a strong enough fight when the EPF payments were reduced to this Province. I questioned the minister on that particular item last year, Mr. Speaker, and he assured us that he had a committee in place. Now, I have been waiting ever since for that committee to report back to this House and tell us that as a result of the new arrangement between Ottawa Blue and Newfoundland Blue the needs of health care in Newfoundland have been recognized by Ottawa. Because we do not have the ability in this Province at the present time, and I could go into the reasons and explain what this government has done to the economy, but I will not do that at this time, but whatever the reason, the fact of the matter is we, as a Province, need a large infusion of federal money in order for us to be able to provide the health care which is required in this latter part of the twentieth century, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. DECKER:
Could I have leave for just a minute?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No.

MR. DECKER:
Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. FENWICK:
I love hearing Ministerial Statements from the Minister of Health. When he says it he says a lot, but in a lot of cases there is not really a lot of meat in it, you have to sort of pick around the bones in order to find it.

There are a few questions that arise and a few comments I would like to make, and maybe later on, at some other opportunity, the minister can divulge the information. He says it is a 6 per cent per year increase, six, six, and six, but then he also says, if you read carefully, 'There will also be an amount equal to 1 per cent of the Medicare fund' - the total amount of Medicare dollars that go out to provide for special malpractice insurance for specialists, which is quite curious, Mr. Speaker, if you start thinking about it. Let us assume those specialists are 5 per cent or 10 per cent of the general population, in which case 1 per cent of the total fund going to them is actually maybe a 10 per cent increase, and these specialists who used to have to bear that cost themselves may be getting a 10 per cent increase there plus their 6 per cent, or maybe a 16 per cent increase.

I am not saying that it is not a good way to attack the problem, because I know there are some problems with these malpractice

insurance rates, but I strongly question whether the minister is hiding more than he is divulging here.

The other thing I should mention just for equity purposes here, is that we are talking about six, six, and six, but, of course, that is on an average salary of - \$100,000 a year?

DR. TWOMEY:

More.

MR. FENWICK:

More? So really we are talking six, six and six of \$100,000 to start with, or more. We are probably talking about a \$20,000 or \$25,000 raise for each one of the doctors in the Province, on average, right across the board.

I mention that because, when you start thinking about the dollars, we should not really begrudge other people down at the lower end of the scale who are asking for the same kinds of raises, where 6 per cent means to them perhaps \$1,200 or \$1,000 or \$800 or something like that. Our doctors are well paid. I do know we have to compete in the marketplace, and my suggestion to the Minister of Finance is if we are going to give them a nice fat raise like that, let us make sure we put some equity into the taxation system when the budget comes down and see how much of it we can get back.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased today to inform hon. members of the tremendous impact that regional development associations are having in this Province. Since their beginning in the late 1960s and up to the signing of the Canada/Newfoundland Rural Development Subsidiary Agreement Two in 1984, development associations have spent over \$58 million on a wide variety of projects and from many sources. Funding came from the provincial and federal government departments, federal/provincial development agreements, job creation programmes and community organizations. As a result over 11,000 short-term, part-time, permanent and seasonal jobs were created, not to mention the facilities and services that were provided.

Mr. Speaker, the interest and achievements of the regional development associations continue to grow.

Since the signing of the Canada/Newfoundland Rural Development Subsidiary Agreement Two in 1984, these associations have had over 800 projects approved totalling over \$32 million. As a result of these grants over 6800 short-term, part-time permanent and seasonal jobs were created. Funding came from a variety of sources, including the provincial contribution of \$2 million under the project funding component of the rural development agreement. When we put all of this together, we came up with a total of \$90 million and the creation of approximately 18,000 jobs while enhancing or maintaining several thousand other jobs.

Mr. Speaker, at present there are fifty-five development

associations involving over 2,000 volunteers at the board and community levels alone, as well as many hundreds who contribute in other ways. These associations have set up fish plants, vegetable storage facilities, mink ranches, fox farms, trout farms, office buildings, craft shops, museums, fire halls and tourist chalets. They have done community surveys, established co-ops and promoted new development opportunities. Development associations have worked closely with government in the development of new methods of aquaculture. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the initiative taken by several development associations in the development of the aquaculture industry in this Province will lead to significant long-term job creation.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the contributions that the regional development associations have made to creating employment in Newfoundland and Labrador cannot be underestimated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the minister for providing me with a copy of his statement, as is the usual custom. Thanks, also, for the initiatives his statement outline.

The interesting part about it is how much further could we go with this. Obviously, there were some steps in the right direction, some progress is being made, and all

due credit to the volunteers who make up the Regional Development Associations, and, of course, their staff members.

Along the lines of the House Commission's recommendations, and a very, very strong statement of support of the idea by the Liberal Party of this Province, greater autonomy, obviously, must be given to the Development Associations in this Province. To carry it further, the method by which that can be accomplished would be the establishment of a separate Department of Rural Development, a fact that the Liberal Party has been pushing for for quite some time.

Now, more autonomy, their own department, their own minister would see even greater strides and even greater growth, I think, in the rural development area of our Province - more jobs, more initiatives and a greater benefit to all concerned - and a little more concentration into the rural areas of our Province.

I find sometimes - this came up last year - that the term 'rural' is applied very loosely by government. When we say rural, we mean rural, outside the City of St. John's. Frequently, places like St. John's benefit to a much greater degree than the rural areas of our Province which is supposed to be the concept of Rural Development Authorities. For example, the Mokami Regional Development Association probably had far less funding than they were looking for - I suppose that is true for any of the associations - in order to carry out the many, many initiatives and ideas that they have themselves.

So I believe that greater

autonomy, I believe that a separate department, and I believe that their own minister would work wonders. The fact that there are fifty-five associations and something over 2,000 volunteers, the minister says, is an indication in itself, I believe, that a separate department is required.

I do not want to tell the hon. the Premier how to run his government, although perhaps somebody should, but this might be -

MR. SIMMONS:
It would not be a bad idea.

MR. MORGAN:
You need somebody over there to run your party.

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

I would ask my hon. friends on the left to please allow the member to continue.

The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your protection. It is a well known fact that the former Minister of Fisheries is now called the 'Salmonella Kid' around town, so I suppose he must voice that every now and then.

But to continue with what I was saying, I believe there is an opportunity -

MR. MORGAN:
(Inaudible) the Speaker's name.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. KELLAND:
Mr. Speaker, may I have some

protection from whoever.

MR. FUREY:
The shredder.

MR. FLIGHT:
The clod from Bonavista South.

MR. FUREY:
No wonder he was in China the Year of the Rat.

MR. MORGAN:
You are in trouble now, my hon. colleague.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

There is one hon. member on my left who persists in interrupting. I will have to name him if he persists in doing that.

MR. MORGAN:
I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. It is provocation from the hon. members opposite.

MR. KELLAND:
To continue, this might be the ideal opportunity for the Premier to expand his Cabinet and give Labrador Cabinet representation in the form of the hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:
I know the hon. member certainly would not turn it down. He should be in Cabinet as a representative of Labrador, of course.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. KELLAND:
May I just make the final closing

statement?

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave!

MR. KELLAND:

I would like to say in this case that if we could have these two gentlemen, the present Minister of Rural, Agriculture and Northern Development (Mr. R. Aylward) and the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) -

MR. SPEAKER:

Does the hon. member have leave?

MR. KELLAND:

- in Cabinet representing the two aspects, we could certainly say that those two very similar heads would be better than one and certainly better than none. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to endorse actually the comments from my colleague from Naskaupi (Mr. Kelland). The Rural Development Movement is funded, which I actually spent, I think, a decade involved with both the Port au Port Economic Development Association and a couple of years on the Executive of Newfoundland and Labrador Rural Development Council. I found those very satisfying years, Mr. Speaker. We were able to accomplish quite a bit. As members may know the Port au Port Economic Development Association is just about the

oldest development association in the Province, going well back into the 1960s, as one of the pioneer institutions.

My suggestions are along the same lines as the - I am sorry he is not the minister yet, as the member for Naskaupi, and that is that I think these associations deserve to have the opportunity to develop more responsibility, more autonomy, more long term planning. In the number of years that I was involved with them and I think up to the present day there has been this emphasis on short-term make work projects primarily because they are one of the few agencies that can deliver these projects in rural areas. But the attempts have been made by most people of goodwill in the movement, and more are, to try and expand that the long term planning to try to integrate these short term policies, to try to make sure that they make a lasting difference on what is going on. I am pleased to hear the minister say that there has been a tremendous increase in the activity in terms of aquaculture because, I think, if that aquaculture is one of the areas that rural development associations should be getting involved in.

Finally one last comment, the President of the Rural Development Council is a fellow by the name of Gerald Smith from Port au Port, who I was involved in the Board with, a fine gentleman. I think the Rural Development Movement is in good hands, and, hopefully we will be able to give them the responsibility to create the jobs that we all know they are capable of creating.

Oral Questions

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Government House Leader (Mr. Ottenheimer), in the absence of the Premier, whether he is aware of the statements made by Canada's Ambassador to France to the effect that he wants to ensure the fisheries dispute does not hurt trade relations with France? Is the minister aware of these statements? Has any communication gone from the minister or the Premier to the Department of External Affairs or the Prime Minister's Office to ask them just whose interests are they putting first, the interest of France or the interest of this Province?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout) and indeed others, but certainly the Premier and the Minister of Fisheries have made it known to the federal government over a long period of time that the Province is dissatisfied and opposes the federal government's apparent inappropriate and wrong set of priorities. Indeed, the Premier some weeks ago asked for the recall of the Canadian Ambassador to France. And the Government of Canada, through the Office of the Prime Minister, through the Office of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr.

Siddon) and through the Office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, (Mr. Clark) is well aware that the Government of Newfoundland totally disagrees with the assessment or recommendations or judgments of the Canadian Ambassador to France sends back to Ottawa. That has been on the record many, many times.

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BARRY:
Would the minister then agree that the Government of Canada, the Prime Minister's Office, the Department of External Affairs and the Canadian Ambassador to France are ignoring the representations made by the ministers and the Premier, to whom he has referred, concerning this important matter?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
Well, Mr. Speaker, there are certainly some areas in which they are obviously not ignoring them because I know that with respect to negotiations with France on questions of the boundary, and those related matters, the federal government is much more aware now of Newfoundland's position and I think will act much more carefully. Only time will tell whether in fact they do fully protect Newfoundland's interests with respect to the fishery as we have urged them to so do. Only time will tell that, obviously, because there are some weeks or months before the final answer on

that will be known. There is no doubt whatsoever in the lack of ambiguity, the absolute clearness of the Province's position and the fact that this has been transmitted to the Government of Canada frequently, clearly and forcefully. Whether the Government of Canada in the final analysis fully implements or accepts the position of the Government of Newfoundland, obviously only time when those matters are resolved will tell.

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BARRY:
This is a supplementary. Does the minister have any idea of the trade balance between Canada and France? If the minister does not, I will so indicate. The balance is approximately \$600 million in France's favour. France is reported to export to Canada \$1.6 billion worth of goods whereas Canada only to France \$1 billion worth. The Ambassador to France has admitted, which is the difficult thing I find to understand about what is going on up there, that France does not want to imperil or endanger that very advantageous trade balance. In light of this most recent statement made at the same moment that the Premier is presenting his case before the Senate committee, in light in the fact that the Ambassador was saying that he agrees with France that the fishery issue should be kept separate from trade, will the minister, one more time, referring directly to these statements of the Canadian Ambassador, go to the Prime Minister and inform him that

is just not good enough?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
Mr. Speaker, the point of the Newfoundland government's dissatisfaction with the position of External Affairs, and indeed very specifically with the actions of the Canadian Ambassador to France, has been made known to the Prime Minister, made known to the Minister of Fisheries, made known to the Secretary of State for External Affairs on a number of occasions, and no doubt will be done so again in the light of these statements by the Canadian Ambassador to France. There is no doubt in the Government of Newfoundland's mind that the advice going to External Affairs from the Canadian Ambassador to France is totally insensitive to Newfoundland's needs and to Newfoundland's priorities. The dissatisfaction of the government with the approach or the attitude of the Canadian Ambassador to France has been made known and will be done so again.

MR. BARRY:
A short final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A final supplementary, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:
Would the minister consider asking, or suggesting to the Premier, that he ask the Prime Minister to consider replacing this Ambassador if the Ambassador continues to place the interests of France in protecting its trade balance with Canada ahead of protecting the East Coast fishery?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, the Premier and others have, obviously, and on a number of occasions informed the Government of Canada that they are dissatisfied with the approach being taken by the Canadian Ambassador to France. The government has also asked for that gentleman's recall, and I have no doubt at all that the Premier would have no objection in advising that he be replaced. Of course, as the hon. gentleman is aware, it is a decision that would have to be made by the federal government. I think, but I do not know so this is a bit of a personal opinion, and I have not met a great number of Canadian Ambassadors in foreign countries although some I have met, many of them have impressed me greatly as thoroughly professional people. Every now and then one comes across one, I think - and I am not saying that of this gentleman from personal knowledge because I have never met him; I do not know him I have never met the man - an ambassador who becomes so influenced by the environment he or she is in that he or she might tend to think that the job is to represent the best interest of the country to which they are assigned rather than the country that they represent. That is probably a danger and no doubt it is sometimes a reality.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe). The current condition of gravel roads in the district of Fortune - Hermitage is at the very least a disgrace and insult to the people who depend on it for transportation. I ask the minister, given that only 110 of 261 students who normally travel to school by bus in the Pool's Cove - Coomb's Cove area daily, did so today because of safety considerations, will he assure the House, and through the House the people most directly affected, that whatever steps can be taken will be taken to help rectify the immediate situation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for his question.

The situation to which he refers is not an uncommon one right throughout the Province, particularly over the past few days, and it was not an uncommon situation in previous years and I am sure it will not be an uncommon situation in the future. There are a great deal of unpaved and gravel roads in the Province that are subject to the kind of softening conditions that Spring brings about, which is complicated this year by the fact that we have had so much snow built up on the sides of the roads, and that this softening of the gravel roads, the requirement for half load limits, and, in fact, for some roads to be closed, appears to be a situation that will last longer this Spring than in the past. There is very little that can be done to alleviate the immediate problem because to put heavy equipment and

vehicles in on that particular stretch of road only compounds the situation and makes it worse. In this particular situation the only solution is either a freezing condition, which will harden up the road conditions again, or it becomes mild enough for a long enough period of time so that the roads themselves dry out. But certainly the long-range permanent solution, as identified by the TRIP organization which is made up of the Highway Construction Association people right across the country, is a billion dollar one and it involves upgrading and strengthening our existing roads, and paving, of course, the ones that are not paved in the Province. This is the long-term solution but in the short-term, as the member indicated, we will, yes, do everything that we can do in the circumstances that are existing there to try and alleviate the problem as quickly and as efficiently as possible.

MR. SIMMONS:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

I say to the minister that the weather, as he has so correctly said, is indeed the immediate villain, but it was not the weather that failed to upgrade those roads, Mr. Speaker, and not the weather that stockpiled crushed stone last Fall instead of putting it on those roads. That villain was the minister and the government.

Now, will he assure the House that, as soon as weather and road conditions permit, he will undertake to have suitable amounts

of crushed stone, already stockpiled in the immediate area, applied as at least a band aid solution rather than left to bleach in sun for up to three years, as is the department's present plan, by the way, and will he assure the House that appropriate funding will be forthcoming without delay to at least commence, this construction season, the upgrading of these roads?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, it is always interesting to hear individual members represent their individual ridings because it is a safe and comfortable position to be coming from, and for the hon. member to request a specific for his riding is admirable in the individual case, but certainly from the perspective of the Department of Transportation we have the responsibility of looking at all the roads in the Province and addressing the concerns in not only the hon. member's riding but also other ridings belonging to hon. members on this side of the House as well as hon. members on the other side of the House. And this is a responsibility that we take very seriously. As I indicated, it is a high expense area to the tune of \$1 billion in the long term to address the needs that have been identified independently. It is something we are trying to grapple with, faced with the limited financial ability that we have in the Province to address these particular situations, and, yes, we will be doing whatever we can do with the funding that we have available to try and alleviate as many of the

problems, and they are many and varied around the Province, as we can address with the funding we have available this coming Summer.

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transportation as well. Mr. Speaker, the minister is aware, of course, from watching and listening to the media yesterday and last night, that there is a similar problem, to the one that my colleague just alluded to, in the town of Bellevue and the Thornlea area. In view of the fact that two paving contractors will be on the Trans-Canada in that immediate area of Thornlea - Bellevue this Summer, paving or repaving the Trans-Canada Highway between the Whitbourne intersection and the Chance Cove intersection at Gull Pond, in view of that fact that paving contractors will be there, let me ask the minister is that a good reason for the people in the Bellevue - Thornlea area to expect that the minister will look seriously at their concerns, their dirt roads, and will put a plan in place whereby one or two of the paving contractors who will be in that area during the Summer will do what is necessary to be done with these roads?

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

MR. DAWE:
There are two things, Mr. Speaker, one is that I indeed take the matter seriously as I do with all the other concerns relating to

transportation in the Province. As it relates to whether I can assure anyone that contractors who may be in the area will undertake work in adjacent parts of that immediate area is something that I certainly cannot answer, and again for two reasons. First of all, Mr. Speaker, that is a similar circumstance as will exist in other parts of the Province throughout the Summer. And secondly, Mr. Speaker, we are into a public tendering process in this Legislature brought in by this particular administration -

MR. CALLAN:
That was done before.

MR. DAWE:
Yes, it was done before, you are right, but it was not done before in this administration.

MR. CALLAN:
Yes, it was.

MR. DAWE:
It was done before when there was no public tendering, no accountability for the tenders and contracts that were given out from the public purse. That situation has changed, Mr. Speaker, and under that particular circumstance public tenders will be called for whatever road work, whether it be paving or upgrading throughout the Province, and the low bidder will acquire the contract as is always the case.

MR. CALLAN:
A supplementary.

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

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker, in responding to what the minister just said I can

point to the Auditor General's Report of the last two or three years where it has been tacked on to existing contracts. Let me ask the minister a supplementary question. Mr. Speaker, the minister is on public record as saying that he supports and favours his friends, so in view of the fact that 80 per cent of the people in Thornlea and Bellevue in the last election voted for the PC candidate and the PC Party, is that not another added reason, in addition to having the paving contractors in the immediate area, why the minister should seriously look at paving the roads for them?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, I think it is shameful that the member opposite should try and use the way people voted to determine whether they get highroad money in the Province or not.

MR. CALLAN:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, just before the present Prime Minister of this country came to power two and a half years ago, he pledged to inflict prosperity on this Province. Now we see in recent days that he is inflicting misery on this Province, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BUTT:

And he will.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. CALLAN:

Let me ask the Minister of Transportation when does he expect a new secondary roads agreement to be signed - we have not had one since the Tories were elected in Ottawa two and a half years ago - and what efforts is the minister making to try and bring about a secondary roads agreement?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of questions in what the hon. member just verbaged so I will try and answer them in due course.

First of all I would like to point out to hon. members opposite, as well as the House - I have done it before, but obviously hon. members do not listen or they do not understand, or both - that about three and a half years ago the provincial government submitted to the federal government a number of proposals relating to cost-shared road agreements. There was essentially a three-pronged approach to it: One dealt with improvements in Labrador, specifically associated with the Trans-Labrador Highway; a second part of that proposal, or really a separate proposal, but a second proposal dealt with a primary highroad or Trans-Canada Highway agreement; the third part dealt with some ongoing commitments on secondary roads, as well as some new proposals under secondary roads. The total amounted to in the vicinity of a half a billion dollars.

Mr. Speaker, under the present federal administration we were successful in acquiring a very large portion - certainly not as

much as we would have liked and certainly not as much as we are trying to obtain in the future - when we obtained \$180 million to address two concerns; one dealing with the primary highroad system, the other dealing with the Trans-Labrador Highway, part of it to deal with ongoing projects, one of them in the Strait of Belle Isle district as it relates to the paving of a road to L'Anse-au-Meadows, and a number of other projects that were ongoing.

Mr. Speaker, we are endeavouring to get into the third phase or the third major project which deals with secondary roads. That will do two things. It will provide much needed input and much needed improvements, large in nature, to secondary roads in the Province. Secondly, it will provide an opportunity for the Province to have more flexibility with the funding it has to do its own provincial road programmes.

So we are working towards it, and hopefully that agreement will be negotiated and signed in the not to distant future.

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FLIGHT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Transportation as well. It is interesting that he is answering questions today with regards to the condition of roads. I want to tell the minister that on this past Monday I drove from Grand Falls to Gander, a distance of sixty-eight miles, to catch a flight at four o'clock in the

evening. The night prior to that there had been a storm that had put a lot of slushy snow on that highroad. One was taking one's life in one's own hands by driving on that sixty-eight mile stretch of road. There was no indication that a plow had been on that road. There was some indication that a plow had started moving from Gander towards Grand Falls, but nothing had moved from Grand Falls to Gander.

Would the minister tell the House why it was that the travelling public on that road was allowed to take their lives in their own hands? Why was the road not either ploughed or closed in the better interests of the safety of the travelling public?

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

MR. DAWE:
Mr. Speaker, throughout the Province, in the various districts, sub-districts, depots and so on that we have, we have a large number of very qualified personnel. Not only the people who operate the snowplows and the ice control equipment around the Province, but also the supervisory personnel, who are on the roads every morning at a minimum of five o'clock to ensure that whatever equipment is necessary, whatever the circumstances in the area with the equipment that is available, whatever the needs are, to address those needs, either through the calling out of our own men and equipment or, if necessary, to undertake the acquisition of additional hired equipment that we have available throughout the Province under standing offer.

The decisions that were made were

made by the professional staff in the area. I would just like to point out to the hon. member, who suggested that perhaps it was not fit to be on the road, that my only comment is that whenever you get behind the wheel of a vehicle and you then take on the responsibility of driving that vehicle, then a number of things have to be taken into consideration, your physical and mental health; the condition of the vehicle that you are driving; and also the condition of the road. That is a judgement call placed upon the driver. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that decision, whether or not the individual was on the road, rests with the driver and the driver alone.

MR. FLIGHT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, the minister will know, or should know, that that road is one of the most congested roads in Newfoundland, used by tractor-trailer transportation and hundreds of cars. Now, I would ask the minister again, after getting that lecture because the staff in Grand Falls in the regional office is very competent. We have never run into this type of thing before but it has been happening this past month. The word has gone out from the minister or the department because of a funding problem - was it to save money the travelling public of Central Newfoundland is allowed to drive in unsafe conditions? If the minister is not careful he is going to have a major disaster on

his hands, if those kinds of conditions are permitted to remain on this road. I myself witnessed drivers, lady drivers, common drivers, coming within inches of colliding with tractor-trailers because there was no way to control a vehicle on that road up until three thirty in the afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

Now, the minister owes it to the travelling public to give an explanation as to why he is allowing those kinds of conditions to exist while he is on yaking about the safety of seatbelts.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, the scaremonger for Windsor - Buchans is on his feet again perhaps only because there are some constituents in the gallery from his riding.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. DAWE:

But it is interesting, Mr. Speaker, to get a question from the member for Windsor - Buchans that does not have something to do with partridge season. But, however, Mr. Speaker, let me point out to the hon. member that he indicated that there was some direction from the executive staff of the Department of Transportation somehow indicating that there is a shortage of funding available, therefore we

cannot do certain things with the roads. That is what the hon. member said, and it is absolutely untrue.

Mr. Speaker, the amount of money that we spent over budget, Mr. Speaker, because of road conditions, because of the weather conditions is an ongoing concern. You can only budget for normal circumstances, and we did that. This was an unusual Winter situation. And we have addressed that, Mr. Speaker, with additional staff, with additional equipment. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that at any point in time during this Winter you would not have been able to find an extra snowplough or an extra piece of snow clearing equipment that was not hired by the department to carry out its mandate to keep the roads clear. So the statement is untrue. It is absolutely untrue, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue to do the excellent kind of job with the roads in the Province that we have been doing.

MR. FLIGHT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The statement is not untrue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LONG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FLIGHT:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I am standing her representing 7,000 people from Windsor - Buchans, some of whom were on that road that day. The minister claims -

MR. SIMMS:

That is not a point of order, Mr. Speaker. He is still tryaing to ask his question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! If the hon. member has a point of order, I am prepared to hear it.

MR. FLIGHT:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. The minister in his final answer to the question suggested that I was dealing in untruths. Mr. Speaker, every word that I have said in this Question Period is true. It is the minister who is misleading this House, Mr. Speaker. There was no plough on that road.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

There had been no plough on that road, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! That is not a point of order.

MR. FLIGHT:

It is a point of fact, Mr. Speaker. And it is interesting to know that the minister -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Sit down! Sit down!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:
- believes that life and death on
the Trans - Canada -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I recognized the hon. the member
for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for
the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! I would ask hon.
members on each side for silence.

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

MR. LONG:
Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Minister of
the Environment (Mr. Butt). My
question is concerning the
situation in St. John's Harbour.
Concerns have been raised that
daily 20 million gallons of
untreated sewerage are being
dumped into the harbour. Now,
with the development of a new
sewerage trunk line from
Penetanguishene, there is going to
be another quarter million gallons
added daily. Is the minister
involved in consultation with
officials from the Engineering
Department of the St. John's City
Council to deal with the pollution
problem in the harbour?

MR. BUTT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BUTT:
Mr. Speaker, I do not know where
the hon. gentleman has been, but
an environmental assessment was
carried out on that trunk sewer
and a full environmental impact
statement issued. There was no
representation from the hon.
member or anyone in the public who
had any concerns about St. John's
Harbour when it was out for public
referral. The only concerns
raised were about contamination of
Virginia River and the affect that
it could have on the water table.

Now granted by allowing this
addition sewer to go into St.
John's Harbour, it is about, I
think, something less than 1 per
cent of what is there right now.
But obviously if the member had
some real concerns he would have
taken advantage of the
environmental impact statement,
that process of coming forward and
making a submission. There was
absolutely no submission made from
the public of St. John's or from
the hon. member at that time.

MR. LONG:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the
member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:
Because members of the public do
not come forward when there are
environmental impact studies done
does not mean that people's
concerns are not real. My
question, again to the minister,
is if he is involved in any kind
of consultation with the city
council to address the financial
difficulties the city is facing in

dealing with the pollution problem of the harbour?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of the Environment.

MR. BUTT:

Mr. Speaker, I can say to the hon. member, the co-pilot of the Rainbow Warrior, that in fact there has been and will be ongoing consultation with the City of St. John's and Ottawa in addressing the concerns over St. John's harbour. It is about \$150 million and I am afraid the provincial Department of the Environment cannot undertake that alone. Yes, there has been consultation, and there will be ongoing consultation with the City of St. John's, and in particular there will be ongoing consultation with Ottawa.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

This is for the Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young). Yesterday, in the House of Assembly, the minister tabled information with respect to a public tender made in July of 1985. I would like to ask the minister why he did not table this information fifteen days into the 1985 session pursuant to Section 4, Subsection (2) of The Public Tendering Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, the section calls for us to table all tenders awarded to other than the low bids and we did that, I presume, and have been doing it with other than the low bids within fifteen days of the

start of this session. The tender the hon. gentleman is taking about I do not think has any relevance whatsoever to that part of the Act.

MR. FUREY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, I am talking about a tender that was given to Lundrigans when they did not bid for Block 1 on that section of space in July 1985. The minister, under his own rules, pursuant to his own Act, had an obligation to this House to table in this House an explanation of why that tender was given to Lundrigans when they did not bid. The Act is very clear, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member is making a speech.

MR. BAIRD:

Ask Graham Watton, who spent a fortune on land there.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FUREY:

I would like to ask the minister why he breached Section 4, Subsection (2) of his own Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that I did breach the Act. If the hon. gentleman reads the documents that I tabled yesterday, the tender called had specification for three

different blocks or for the whole works. Lundrigans in their specifications said that they would tender on Blocks 2 and 3, I think, and also that there was space available in adjacent floors or buildings. They were satisfied to tender for the whole block at ten dollars per square foot.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

o o o

MR. BRETT:
Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of Privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Social Services on a matter of Privilege.

MR. BRETT:
This is a matter that came to my attention since I came to the House. In today's edition of The Evening Telegram there is a reference to my statements outside the House. I feel that I have been misquoted. Now, I realize that is a favorite saying of politicians. I do not think that the person who wrote this deliberately misquoted me. I am almost certain that that person did not.

I am quoted here as saying, "'I hate to say this,' Mr. Brett told reporters outside the House, 'but he" - referring to the juvenile I was being questioned about in the House yesterday - "is a hardened criminal - he has committed a crime - he has been convicted on five counts and has been sentenced to serve 90 days.'"

Again I reiterate, Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge, I did not say that the youth was a hardened criminal. However, the rest of it I did say. I believe that I said, 'He is not a hardened criminal.' I am reasonably certain that that is what I said, because, if hon. members will recall, the Province of Newfoundland and, I think, every other province in Canada fought against the Young Offenders Act.

One of the reasons that they did so was because it is felt by professional social workers and other people who are involved in the field of social work that incarceration does nothing really for young offenders except make them hardened criminals. So I was trying to point out to the media that, while this particular juvenile was not a hardened criminal, he had, in fact, committed a crime.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in the first paragraph of that article, the writer says that I claimed to have "'checked and double checked' and cannot find a 'shred of evidence' to suggest why a young offender escaped from a security guard in St. John's and fled to his mother's home in Georgetown, C.B."

I did not say that at all. What I said is that I had checked and double checked and could find no evidence of anything serious happening. There was some suggestion that something had happened and I said that I could find no evidence that anything had happened at the home or at the hospital, not that I had checked and double checked and did not know why he ran away. It is obvious why he ran away. He ran away because he did not want to go

to jail. So again, Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify that.

I would not, as the Minister of Social Services, want people to believe that I think that way. It is not my own belief that these young offenders are hardened criminals. It is also not the belief of anybody who works with me. I would ask that that reporter, and that person is a very fine reporter, very fair, that he or she, whoever it is, be extremely careful when they are quoting me outside the House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker, the Opposition accepts that statement. It is a responsible statement for the minister to make. He has shown a degree of responsibility in making that statement that I fear, Mr. Speaker, might have been lacking, I am sure, inadvertently, in the way in which he has responded to questions from the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) in the course of this matter being discussed in the House.

I would say to the minister - he repeated the error again in this statement today - do not dismiss lightly the possibility of their being a serious reason why that young man went to the extreme measure he did in trying to avoid going back. Now the minister says, 'it is obvious what it was, it was because he did not want to go to jail.' For the minister's information, there has been

further information supplied only a few minutes ago to members on this side from the Constabulary. There is a matter of some seriousness which is under investigation and the minister should not have to await the report of a police investigation in order to make sure that young people -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

It does not appear to the Chair that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is speaking to this point of privilege. He is now dealing with the right or wrong of the particular thing that this person did or did not do.

MR. BARRY:
I take Your Honour's point. I will conclude with just one brief, final comment.

The minister should not await the results of a police investigation before taking all possible measures, including permitting the parents of this young man the right to speak to him in confidence, in private, so as to ensure that this young man, if there is any basis to the allegations that are being made, is not put through something that no young person under the minister's control and responsibility should be put through.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
Mr. Speaker, very briefly, I think the hon. minister got up on a

point of privilege, as is not uncommon, in order to correct a misquotation, which he did, and the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) replied to it. I did not realize the hon. minister wished to make another clarification. All I am suggesting is that I think we should finalize the matter and get on with other matters.

MR. BRETT:

Mr. Speaker, if I may.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT:

Just for one minute. My remarks this afternoon were strictly on what I think to be a point of privilege and not on what happened yesterday. Seeing the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) choose to go back into yesterday, then I would like to have the opportunity to very briefly respond.

Up until yesterday when I was answering questions from the hon. member from Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) and when I was talking to the press, there was no shred of evidence and my remarks this afternoon were based on that. Subsequent to that, I have, in my investigation, found out that the youth in question choose to give CBC a story via the telephone and he also choose to give the hon. the member from Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) a story, I guess, in person. Subsequent to the member for Port de Grave going to the police, the police very swiftly got on the matter and my senior staff are also on it. I want to assure the House and the hon. the Leader of the Opposition that proper channels are being

followed. I guess that is as much as is expected of the department and myself as the minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of privilege I must rule there is no prima facie case of breach of privilege. I think the hon. minister took the opportunity of correcting statements that he believes are incorrect.

Notices of Motion

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following motion:

WHEREAS the Minister of Public Works has deliberately misled this hon. House in his response to the questions raised concerning the issuing of a memorandum in his department as referred to in the Point of Privilege raised last Thursday by the member for Fortune - Hermitage and in questions raised by the member for Fogo;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that this House agrees to refer the matter to the Committee on Privileges and Elections for appropriate action.

This would be a private members' motion, as I understand it. However, to avoid any cloud hanging over the minister's head for any extended period of time by having this on the Order Paper, I would ask the Government House Leader (Mr. Ottenheimer) to

consider moving it up and having it debated and dealt with in a fairly fast and expeditious fashion.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:
Mr. Speaker, obviously, if the motion is in order, it would be a private members' motion and we would judge that at a later date.

I would just refer Your Honour, and I am not going to make a long argument out of it, with respect to whether the motion is in order or not in the sense that when the House has determined something in a particular session, whether that is then subject to coming up again, whether a principle of - I do not know of any term to use - res judicata applies or not. I would draw this to the Speaker's attention and obviously it can be ruled on later.

MR. SPEAKER:
I would like to get some advice on that matter.

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. BARRETT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Development and Tourism.

MR. BARRETT:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a letter which I had written to the hon. Eric Nielsen, the then

Minister of Defense, concerning the proposed Atlantic area sea cadet camp. This is in response to a question tabled by the hon. the member for Stephenville (Mr. K. Aylward) for such information.

o o o

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask leave in accordance with Standing Order 23 to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgent public importance. Mr. Speaker, I refer you to Standing Order 23 (f) which upholds my right to raise the matter at this time, subject to six restrictions. The restrictions are laid out in paragraph 23 (f) on page eight. I will not read them for you, Mr. Speaker, because I am sure you are quite familiar with the restrictions that are laid out there.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the matter I wish to discuss is easily accommodated within these six restrictions. The matter I place before you, Mr. Speaker, for discussion as one of urgent public importance is the considerable threat to the safety of thousands of citizens in dozens of communities across the Province; including many in Fortune-Hermitage district; the diminished access to emergency medical services; the serious disruption of the primary, elementary and secondary education

function; and the general undermining of the daily routine of those citizens occasioned by the current state of roads serving those communities for which the weather must really take the immediate blame but for which the ultimate culprit is a callous and incompetent government.

Mr. Speaker, as I am required to do under Standing Order 23 (c), I now provide you, Sir, with a written statement of the matter I propose for discussion.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that the adjournment of the House for the debate of this matter now would not be appropriate. The precedents of the House are very, very clear, indeed, parliamentary authority in Beauchesne and others is very clear and that is that it is not the urgency of the matter but the urgency of debate, and whether the debate now can alter weather conditions or whatever, that is highly unlikely. Basically, it is not the urgency of the matter but the urgency of debate and also of course there is the provision whether there would be other opportunity to debate it and it is well known that the government will be calling Interim Supply which deals with expenditures under the various departments. Under our precedents, debate on supply is very, very wide. Indeed, it is like a budget debate before the budget is brought in and is governed usually by the same rules of relevance. So I would suggest

that there would be an opportunity for debate there.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, if I may respond very briefly to the Government House Leader.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

As I very carefully and deliberately said in my submission, the matter of the weather would likely be thrown into this as a red herring. It is that. The urgency, Mr. Speaker, is not the nature of the weather today but the inclination of the mind of the government every day. It is important that this House instruct the government to address what is a very serious situation, disrupting the school activities of many people, threatening their access to medical care, and generally disrupting their daily routine. I believe if that matter, Mr. Speaker, is not of sufficient urgency and does not require sufficient urgency of debate, then what is it we are doing here as a group of people purporting to represent those same people whose lives are being disrupted, not only in Fortune-Hermitage, but in many districts throughout this Province because of the incompetence of this government and because of its lack of direction, particularly in terms of the upgrading of roads.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I agree that there is a certain urgency about this matter, but there is not a great urgency of debate at the present time because there are other opportunities to do so in the next few days. I must rule

the matter out of order.

Orders of the Day

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Motion 2.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Newfoundland Standard Time Act," carried. (Bill No. 14)

On motion, Bill No. 14 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Motion 3.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Chairman, I find it unusual, amazing, and indeed baffling that the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) refuses to comment upon the present financial condition of this Province. I say that in view of the statements made by the Premier just recently, a statement to the effect that this Province was heading for bankruptcy, was heading for a financial position as grave and as serious as that of the 1930s, when we lost Responsible Government. I suppose, Mr. Chairman, there was never a more serious statement made about the financial position of this Province, there was never

a more serious statement made by any public figure in the entire history of this Province than that statement made by the Premier. The statement, Mr. Chairman, was of such seriousness, was of such gravity it required a statement by the Minister of Finance in this House of Assembly, in this Legislature. The minister, himself, immediately after the Premier made the serious statements about the financial position of the Province, was shortly quoted in the press, quoted by the media, as saying that the financial condition of the Province was indeed bleak. Here we had the Premier making this serious statement about the financial condition of the Province, the minister, indeed, backing him up, although not as vigorously, not as forcefully, not as emphatically, but certainly giving the indication that the financial position of the Province was indeed a serious one, and yet the minister refuses to comment upon that situation.

I believe it is incumbent upon the minister to give a report of the financial condition of the Province in view of the statements made by the Premier before budget time, because the minister, in talking about the financial situation of the Province, was talking about the present financial situation, the financial situation for this fiscal year. That is what the minister was addressing, that is what he was talking about, and in future statements he mentioned that the deficit had escalated, and obviously the minister was talking about this fiscal year. Now, it is time that the Minister of Finance, I believe, addressed these serious questions, these doubts that the people of this

Province have about the financial position of this Province, the doubts, obviously, that investors must have about the financial position of this Province, the doubts that the Province's financial agents must have about this Province's financial position. Mr. Chairman, I believe the minister has an obligation and a responsibility to tell this House precisely what is the financial position of this Province now.

Mr. Chairman, the financial situation of this Province has been commented upon by members on this side for some time. We have indicated that the financial condition of this Province is certainly in a sorry state. We did not know that it was as bad as the Premier indicated, we did not know it was that bad, and we did not know it was as bad as the Minister of Finance indicated, but, Mr. Chairman, we knew that it was in bad shape because we have been saying for sometime that it is in bad shape, and to substantiate that we have alluded to the public debt. It is not the first time that we pointed out to the minister what the public debt of this Province was and indicated the sorry state we were in. The minister has indicated now that we have the highest per capita debt in Canada; I think somewhere around \$8,012 is the accurate figure. If we translated that into a family of four - most statistics today are calculated on a family of four - that means that their part, their share of the public debt of this Province would be \$32,048. So if any hon. members opposite have four in family and they wanted to pay off their share of the public debt, that is what they would have to pay, \$32,048.

Now, Mr. Chairman, it is growing. If we could put a cap on it and let it stay there, but it is growing. We have lost control. It is escalating. It is increasing. I think the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) when he was speaking to the public debt in the Throne Speech debate or in some other debate, used figures to indicate how the public debt of this Province has escalated.

Mr. Chairman, it is not Liberal philosophy, by the way, to be pooh-poohing, to be negative with respect to the public debt. That is not Liberal philosophy entirely. Liberal philosophy is we would like to be able to see something for that public debt. We have the highest per capita debt in Canada, \$8,012, resulting in a total public indebtedness of somewhere in excess of \$4 billion - \$4,487 billion, you might say, is the public debt.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that is an incredible figure. I would venture to say not only is it an incredible figure for most members in this House, if not all members in this House, it is an incomprehensible figure. The hugeness of this figure is almost beyond the comprehension of an ordinary individual. Even \$1 million dollars is, in reality, beyond the comprehension of most people. But when we look at \$4.5 billion, Mr. Chairman, the question that must be asked is what do we have to show for this indebtedness? What do we have to show for this huge public debt? An unemployment rate, Mr. Chairman, that is the highest in our history, an unemployment rate that is the highest in Canada, an unemployment rate that is double the national average of the Canadian unemployment rate.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that is what we have for all of this spending, the highest unemployment rate in Canada, the highest cost of living, and on it goes. With this public indebtedness the question must be asked, does this not represent incompetence? Does this not represent mismanagement of the people's money of this Province?

Mr. Chairman, I would suggest one of the reasons why this Province is in no better financial position is because of the mismanagement of the finances of this Province, political patronage, and pork barrelling.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I hope we do not have to get on to that in this session of the House. I want to say this, it has been a past practice. I have been most delighted, and I am the first to say it, with a couple of policy changes that I have noticed happening in this House by government in the past couple of months that indicates they are on the right track.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. LUSH:
If I could just, by leave, mention the two points that I find very impressive, that I am pleased with.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
By leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Carry on.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Leave has been granted.

MR. LUSH:
I am a person who will give credit

where credit is due. I have been very pleased with the announcement by the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands with respect to the job creation programmes that his department has been involved with. I think it is very fair. Nobody on this side of the House has complained too much about that. So it is not a case of the Opposition saying that there is political patronage and that there is pork barrelling, which is a natural thing for them to say, so that is proof positive.

Mr. Chairman, again, the job creation programme was done in a very equitable manner. I wish there was more money. I do believe that this was done very fairly. I commend the government on these two initiatives. I commend the government on their fairness. So it is not a matter of the Opposition saying everything is pork barrelling at all, Mr. Chairman. When the government does things based on fair play, we will be the first to say it.

Mr. Chairman, there are other points I would like to address, but I will get a later opportunity.

MR. J. CARTER:
Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. J. CARTER:
Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, ordinarily you listen to criticisms that are made and you respond on the basis of those criticisms which is fair enough, it is the way to go, it is a reasonable approach to take, but when you realize where these criticisms are coming from, I am

afraid you have to look at the people who are making the criticisms rather than the criticisms themselves.

Now, these critics are the very people who only this week drove fifteen knives into the back of their leader, their own leader, the one they choose democratically, the one they have been touting as the sure hope for the Liberal Party, these very same people who would now criticize us, which is their right, certainly - in fact, it is their duty - are knife artists in their own right and for us to listen seriously to them is very, very hard.

Now, the member for Fortune - Hermitage has tried several times to disrupt the proceedings of this House today, and we do not know what kind of tricks he will bring in tomorrow. Also, he made a very, very aggressive speech yesterday that possibly verges on the unparliamentary, I would not know about that. Anyway, I think, Mr. Chairman, it is foolish of us to pay any attention to these remarks. You know, the truth of the matter is - I do not know if it is the truth of the matter - there has been some speculation in some quarters that the member for Mount Scio is not really a Liberal, that he really was a secret agent of the P.C. Party sent over to sow discord into the ranks and, therefore, since his job is practically complete and since he has just about achieved his desired aim, he may very soon come back to the P.C. ranks.

MR. REID:

No, we do not want him.

MR. J. CARTER:

Now, admittedly, he would have to do a long and arduous penance, but

if it should come out that he was really a secret agent all this while, we may very well be able to forgive him.

MR. BAKER:

Are you adding chiropractors to the list?

MR. J. CARTER:

Well, I will get on to that in a moment.

If the member for Mount Scio really did embark upon a secret mission of his own, then if he was able to prove this to our satisfaction I think we would be able to welcome him back into our fold as an hon. member.

I must say, judging by the results of what has happened to the Liberal party, I think this theory is a very tenable one, that the member for Mount Scio instead of being a poor Liberal has been a great P.C. I am very tempted and very attracted to this theory, because I cannot see a person as intelligent as the member for Mount Scio going into such a nest of scoundrels as the Opposition represents, not only going into such a nest, but trying to be the leader of such a group would be very foolish.

This is the same group that would bleed off the medicare payments to the chiroquackers. The Chairman of their caucus only today, and certainly a few days ago, has been loud in his defence of this particular brand of quacks, who, in the Province of Ontario, by the way, bleed off \$60 million a year in Ontario medicare funds. Sixty million dollars a year are lashed out by the Government of Ontario to 1300 of these practitioners.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What did you call them?

MR. J. CARTER:

Practitioners dubious.

MR. FUREY:

Did you say quacktitioners?

MR. J. CARTER:

Quacktitioners. Good! You have taken the words right from my mouth.

I think the point I am trying to make, and I think I have made it quite well, is that we should not pay too much attention to the criticisms coming from the other side. When the Minister of Finance decides to get up and deal with the criticisms he should deal with them in a very offhand manner, because they are not serious, they are not coming from serious people. However good the points may be, they are good only by accident. They are not by design, because the people on the opposite side have thoroughly disgraced themselves. They have knifed their leader. They have knifed themselves. They stand for nothing. In fact, they are a no-good bunch of nobodies.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

At this time I would like to read out the questions for the Late Show.

DR. COLLINS:

Can you read the writing, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

With great difficulty.

The first one is, "I am dissatisfied with the answer given by the Minister of Transportation

regarding the provision of funds for secondary roads in the Province and I wish to debate the matter on today's Late Show." From the hon. the member for Bellevue.

The second one, "I give notice, in accordance with Standing Order 31(g), that I am dissatisfied with the answer given to the House by the Minister of Transportation in response to my question earlier today concerning road conditions in the district of Fortune - Hermitage and I intend to raise the matter in the Late Show." From the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

The third one, "I wish to debate a question I asked the Minister of Transportation in today's Question Period. I am dissatisfied with the minister's answer." From the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I was on to one of the reasons why we find ourselves in the financial mess that we are in and I talked about patronage and pork barrelling, because when money is spent in these areas, it is obviously not spent prudently, it is not spent in a way where we get the biggest return on our investment, quite obviously. I notice in this particular bill two areas that are of significant concern, I am sure, to all members on this side of the House, transportation and municipal affairs.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that is where the pork barrelling took place in the past, in these two areas. Now, I have indicated that I as a member and I am sure other hon. members, have been relatively pleased with particularly two programmes this year. The Provincial Job Creation Programme: I am not pleased with the nature of the programme, but certainly in the distribution of funds it was done in an equitable manner, and with the forestry job creation programme recently announced by the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

Now, I hope that the government are not using these two programmes to disguise what will happen with respect to the funding in municipal affairs, capital works funding, and transportation in road improvements, maintenance, construction, paving and the like.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I will be the first to commend the government, I will be the first on my feet in this House or on the airwaves somewhere throughout this Province to commend the government if I see the same equality, the same equal sharing of money in these two departments as we have seen with the two programmes to which I have already alluded. I will be the first to commend the government when I see monies allocated to repair the roads to Greenspond or the road to Cape Freels, and, Mr. Chairman, I am not looking for both. I will accept them, of course, and I will be very glad, but being a reasonable member, a fair-minded person I will welcome funding for improvements, upgrading of any one of these two roads. I am not suggesting that that is what the government will do, but that has been their past record, Mr. Chairman. I will be

looking closely at the capital works funding in municipal affairs. In last year's budget there was not one penny allocated for the district of Bonavista North, not one penny, so, Mr. Chairman, I will be looking at that. So I alert the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), I alert the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe), I alert and serve warning on the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Doyle) that we will be watching.

Also, I hope that the Minister of Municipal Affairs keeps his commitment to the municipalities of this Province, that the projects will be allocated, I believe, as of March 31. I believe that is what he said, that all capital funding works projects for municipalities will be announced on March 31. We are not a great distance from that date right now. Only a few more days and we shall be watching, we shall be looking to see that the monies are distributed fairly, justly and equitably. Mr. Chairman, as I have said before, without belabouring the point, I shall be the first on my feet to commend the government.

Now I would advise hon. gentlemen not to try to gain too much satisfaction out of the apparent troubles on this side of the House. I would advise them not to do that because what I am hearing is the lid is about to come off over there as well. That is what I am hearing, Mr. Chairman. The lid is about to come off over there too. Right now they are sharing in someone else's misery. That is the type of people they are, Mr. Chairman.

MR. J. CARTER:

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Order, please!

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

MR. J. CARTER:

Mr. Chairman, it has long been recognized that it is an offence in this House to mislead the House. Now I am suggesting that the member is deliberately misleading the House. There is no question about that. I do not think he is the type to do that but he is inadvertently and unwittingly misleading the House. There is no problem among the caucus on this side and to suggest that is to mislead the House and perhaps to mislead the general public. There may be a few who may believe him. I doubt he believes it himself but on the off chance that the odd low-minded Liberal may believe him in the general public, I suggest that the record should be corrected. So I stand to correct the record.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

There is no point of order. The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

No, Mr. Chairman, the hon. the member who just spoke, who just took his place, the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter), I think he realized that I was getting close to the truth and it was beginning to hurt. Yes, Mr. Chairman, there are problems on the government side of the House. There are problems there and I do not know how much longer they are going to be able to keep them capped. I do not know but I do not think it is going to be too much longer, Mr. Chairman, before the discontent and the dissatisfaction just

explodes on that side of the House. For the time being, for just a few hours, for just a few more hours, they are sort of getting some pleasure out of what they think are miseries on this side of the House and, Mr. Chairman, they are not miseries, let me assure you.

In a few days we will have resolved what is going on on this side of the House and we shall be flying in high gear, everybody, the Leader of the Opposition included. That is the type of people we are. So, Mr. Chairman, I warn members on the other side of the House, let us not get too optimistic about what is going on until you have solved the problems on your own side.

Mr. Chairman, I wanted to get in to the issuing of Special Warrants but again, before I leave the point of patronage and pork barrelling, I want to serve warning to hon. members that we will be watching, we will be looking and we will be the first to commend the government because that is where the monies lie. What we have got now in respect of these two programmes are just simply a pittance. This is where the big bucks lie, in the Department of Transportation and in the Department of Municipal Affairs. That is where they lie and we are going to be watching.

We realize as well, Mr. Chairman, the difficult job that the government has with respect to allocating monies in Municipal Affairs, with respect to the requests they get. We realize that. But we are going to be looking for the fair and equitable distribution of these funds. That is what we are going to be looking for.

Mr. Chairman, we talked about the Special Warrants, pointing out in forceful terms that we think the government are abusing Special Warrants and taking great liberty with The Financial Administration Act of this Province. We wonder why it is that the government insists on doing this. Why is it that the Minister of Finance insists on doing this? I want to ask him a question about one Special Warrant. I do not have all of the identification for it, but I think the minister will be able to get it from what I am going to say. I refer to the Special Warrant of February 26 which gave to the Department of Career Development just about \$3 million for salaries and student aid.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Greening)
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. LUSH:

If I just might make a final statement so the minister gets the question.

MR. J. CARTER:

You would cut them off, would you?

MR. LUSH:

No, no, not cut them off, but why is it that the minister could not budget for these salaries? The schools are there. We knew their salaries had to be paid. Why is it that the minister could not budget for these salaries? I will be awaiting the answer from the Minister of Finance when he stands to speak in this debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman, just a very brief few remarks. Do not go away, you will have an opportunity. The hon. member brought up a number of points, and rather than let them all build up and we do not know if they will be responded to or not, it is probably as well to respond to them one by one.

He again, as he did last time, make some remarks about the economic situation we are in as a province, and the financial situation we are in as a government. He is quite aware, of course, that is the sort of thing that has to be really left in the Budget Speech. I do not intend to go into it in great detail here today.

But I think he makes a good point in that I think people are concerned and they want more information, perhaps, moreso this year than in other years because they see that some parts of Canada are doing extremely well. Other parts of Canada are not, and we are one of those parts, and they are wondering how come. The recession is over now and some parts have recovered very well and we have not. So, why is this? I think there is need for some additional information on that. I think that we can look forward to the Budget presentation as containing a fair bit of information along that line.

As I said the last day I do have to point out and I want to emphasize this so that in case there is any words picked up by the media now, I do not think there will be because they seem to leave the House as soon as

Question Period is over, so you can almost say anything in this House after Question Period, and it never really gets out to the public.

But in case there is some pick up, I want to reiterate that out West, B.C. is only now beginning to recover from the recession. At one time, not too long ago, they had an unemployment rate of 13 per cent, I think it was, which was unheard of in B.C.'s history.

Alberta, of course, for obvious reasons is still way down in terms of their usual level of growth. They certainly have not recovered from the recession.

Saskatchewan put out an economic and financial review just a week ago, and that showed that they are in considerable difficulties both economically and financially. And, indeed, as a result of that and even though they stated a general outline of how they are going to deal with it, they ran into difficulties with the credit rating agencies.

In the Central part of the country, things are quite bright. Ontario is very bright.

MR. BARRY:

What party is in power?

DR. COLLINS:

Ontario had this build up of things being done for quite a number of years and now they are beginning to pay off. The new administration that happened to be there when the pay off were getting a certain amount of benefit from it.

Quebec was a bit slower than Ontario in coming out of the recession, but they were quite

distinctly coming out now and doing reasonably well.

If you come further East than that, you will run into difficulties again.

MR. BARRY:

Prince Edward Island?

DR. COLLINS:

Prince Edward Island is in a very difficult situation. They, for a long time, had been doing quite well because of their agricultural products, essentially. Tourism was not too hot in recent years over there. Agriculturally they were doing quite well, but now they have run into difficulties. Nova Scotia is running into difficulties. New Brunswick is running into difficulties, and ourselves.

So, we are not alone in this. I am not saying this as one of great comfort, but just to put it in a proper context. This is not, as the hon. member over there was suggesting somehow, some particular gross mismanagement that has impacted this Province and this is the whole measure of the thing.

MR. SIMMS:

Who said that?

DR. COLLINS:

It is incredible, but one of the members opposite said it.

It is not the case. It is unfortunate. We intend to and will do a lot about it, not just something, we will do a lot about it. But it is one of those things that we are not uniquely distressed by.

Now, as far as the public debt, again I think there is information

needed on that. There is misconception about the public debt. I do not think that the hon. member really totally believes what he is saying himself when he says that the public debt is out of control. He knows it is not. But, nevertheless, I think there is an element of concern about the public debt. Perhaps some of it is even stimulated by such remarks as the hon. member made. So I think we need to lay that out in clear terms. The public debt is not out of control. The public debt is difficult. It is difficult in quite a number of provinces. We have got a better handle on our public debt than quite a number of other provinces, particularly a number of other provinces that are considerably better off than we are.

I think we have to remember that our public debt, by and large, was run up for capital account. So when the hon. member says, 'What have we got to show for it. We only have unemployment. We only have this, that, and the other thing,' what we have to show for our public debt are roads, hospitals, schools, mines, because some of our public debt goes to help these sorts of activities, and many other things. We have much to show for it.

Now, granted in recent years some of our public debt has gone to take care of current account deficits. That is a sort of a new thing for us, but that is a reflection of the severest recession this country has seen since the 1930's. Undoubtedly, some of the money that was put in on the capital side did not give the returns that were hoped for. I do not want to go back into history, but I have to get in a

little crack here. The Smallwood regime put a lot of money on the capital side into industries, and, of course, these industries did not pan out. It is unfortunate. I think it was poor planning, by and large, that they did not. But anyway, they did not pan out. But that is just an example. You do not always get a return on your capital investment.

We have a lot of absolutely essential infrastructure, infrastructure that if we did not have, we would not be a modern society, and certainly we would not be a Canadian society. When we joined Confederation we were supposed to very quickly get our social and physical infrastructure up to the Canadian level, which we have done to a very large degree, much of it with federal help, but also very much of it with great effort and great struggle on the part of the Newfoundland people and the Newfoundland Government.

So, as I say, the budget we hope will show some further details that will lay out the picture in terms of the economics of the Province, the finances of the government, and the structure of the public debt. It will be perhaps in a bit more detail that we have been used to, because I think it requires it at this time.

Thank you.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I always hesitate to get up and

speak to something presented by the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance is leaving, but he indicates he is going to be listening with rapt attention while he is drinking a coffee or whatever he drinks out there.

I would like to deal with some items that are very specific to the finances of this Province. I did not intend to get up and speak today but the Minister of Finance kind of stimulated me to find the energy to stand on my feet and present a few ideas for his consideration. Two of these items were brought up during Question Period in his absence. They has to do with the handling of the finances of the Province, and there are a couple of other things that I thought I would bring to his attention.

First of all, he talked about controlling the debt, and really the debt of this Province is not out of control. I would suggest to the Minister of Finance that there are many ways to state the debt of a Province, many ways. For instance, there are items that the Minister of Finance has decided to leave out of the calculation of the debt of this Province, things like the expenditures that would have to be made if the pension funds were considered. I understand that the liabilities that the Province has in terms of the pension plan administered by the Province is something like \$1.5 billion. That no where appears as a debt to the Province. It appears somewhere as a note in the financial statement but, in actual fact, according to accounting practice, I believe this should be included as part of the provincial debt.

Also I believe in some cases

assets have been overstated. When you come to the balance sheet of a province you look at the assets and liabilities and the difference is the debt. In some cases I believe the assets have been overstated. As an example, I could point to the 1986 Public Accounts of the Province where the assets of the Marystown Shipyard is obviously overstated on the books of the Province.

I would suggest to the Minister of Finance that in order to determine whether the debt is out of control or not, we have to look at the accounting practices and we have to look at what the minister includes as a debt, what he includes as a liability, what he includes as an asset and how he regards these things.

I believe that the minister has, in fact, understated the debt and overstated the assets of this Province. I believe that the liabilities of this Province are even greater than would be indicated by a glance through the Public Accounts of the Province.

There are some other practices that were very noticeable. For instance, if you look at the Public Accounts of the Province for 1985, you will find that there is an amount there that describes the debt increase, if this were considered, if we were to consider the foreign exchange conversions, that the debt of the Province would increase by \$277 million. Now this is just a note to the financial statement. It is not included as part of the debt, a note. It is questionable whether that should be included as part of the debt. However, that is not my point today.

Mr. Chairman, in 1985, as of March

31, 1985 it was stated that this particular amount would increase our debt by \$277 million. If you check the 1986 Public Accounts of this Province you will find that same date, March 31, 1985, the same number, except the amount is changed. All of a sudden instead of \$277 million, which it was in 1985, this fixed amount, as of that date in time, now has become \$227 million. With a stroke of the pen \$50 million has disappeared.

MR. DAWE:
From what?

MR. BAKER:
It is a note to the Public Accounts of the Province and I could show the minister later. It would take some time.

With a stroke of the pen, \$50 million disappeared from the debt of the Province. In other words, by a stroke of the pen, we are theoretically \$50 million better off. Now that is very inventive accounting. It is a very unique way to create, out of thin air, \$50 million. In essence, that is what you are doing. You are saying that as of that date, if the conversions were done, now we would save \$50 million from one year to the next. These figures cannot change. Somehow it has happened.

The member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) would be extremely interested in this because I pointed this out before and he attempted to give the Government House Leader an explanation which, of course, was not quite correct. It is interesting to note the EU8 bond issue in 1985 is shown in the Public Accounts of the Province as a U.S. dollar issue. That same issue, along with, Mr. Chairman, a

lot of other borrowings down through the years, is shown in either U.S. or Swiss or Canadian issue.

MR. J. CARTER:
A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
A point of order, the hon. the member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER:
Again I would be the last person in the world to suggest that the member for Gander is deliberately misleading this House. In fact, I will stoutly maintain that he is not deliberately misleading this House, but I will suggest that he may be misleading the House. My explanation should not be too lengthy.

The borrowing that he is talking about was a borrowing of American funds, but Canadian dollars were requested. The agents who supplied the money said, 'Right, you want to borrow Canadian funds. We have American funds. We will freeze the rate as of today's date.' Now that was January 30, I believe. The rate, if my memory serves me correctly, was \$1.32. In other words, each American dollar was \$1.32.

MR. BAKER:
What is the point of order, Mr. Chairman?

MR. J. CARTER:
The point of order, Mr. Chairman, if I might repeat, is that the member is unwittingly misleading the House, and I think the House has a right to truth, as members see it. Now, it may be that I am misleading the House, but I am certainly not trying to and I do not suggest that the member opposite is trying to mislead the

House either. I am just suggesting that he unwittingly may be misleading the House and that the right facts should be brought up at the earliest possible moment. I have several past speakers who nod their acquiescence.

Just to go over it once more, very quickly.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Chairman, is he going to give a speech?

MR. J. CARTER:

No. I will go further. If the hon. gentleman is running out of time I would be the first one to give him leave to continue his remarks.

MR. BAKER:

Go ahead. Go ahead.

MR. J. CARTER:

If the rate is fixed, Mr. Chairman, then you can call it an American loan, you can call it a Canadian loan, you can call it a Japanese loan, you can call it any kind of loan you like. It amounts to the same thing. There is where the misunderstanding occurs.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

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

MR. BAKER:

It is not that I do not trust the acting, acting, acting House Leader there but my time is almost up. I will respond to that point of order.

I would thank the member for St. John's North for going through his

discourse. He must realize, of course, that I am not debating the mechanics of the loan. What I am pointing out to the member, Mr. Chairman, is that if you look at the 1985 Public Accounts of the Province that are published - we all have copies of them - you see EU8, an amount American, U.S. Now that is on black and white in the Public Accounts of the Province. That is all I am saying.

Now then, Mr. Chairman, what I was going to compare this with was if you look at the 1986 Public Accounts of this Province, that same bond issue now is stated in so many dollars Canadian.

My point, Mr. Chairman, just to assure members that I was not misleading the House, because it is in black and white and all members can read it and see that I am obviously correct, I am making the point that all of these other issues that are listed as debts of the Province - there are many of them there, a couple of pages of them - none of them changed from 1985 to 1986, except that one. It magically and mysteriously changed from a U.S. issue to a Canadian issue. I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, and what I was trying to suggest was that this is what I call it creative accounting.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

To that point of order, there is a definite difference of opinion between two hon. members. Meanwhile, the hon. member for Gander's time is up.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Forest, Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), I will advise the member for Gander (Mr. Baker) that I have carefully taken notes of everything that he commented on in the debate. I will discuss them with the Minister of Finance, brief him on what the hon. member said. It should not take me too long, because what the hon. member said in ten minutes I say it could be said in about ten seconds.

MR. BAKER:

If you understood, yes.

MR. SIMMS:

However, -

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Did you hear him on Open Line this morning?

MR. SIMMS:

No, I did not hear the hon. member for Gander.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

He was on Open Line this morning.

MR. SIMMS:

Is the hon. the member for Gander in the leadership race?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Yes, I think so.

MR. SIMMS:

The hon. the member for Gander has announced his candidacy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Could we have order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Forest, Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Chairman, whether or not the hon. member for Gander is announcing his candidacy as a candidate for the Liberal Party leadership is irrelevant to this particular debate here today. The debate here today deals with Interim Supply.

Whilst the member for Gander took the occasion to talk about accounting practices and show us his stuff, his great knowledge of accounting practices, it was all very interesting. As I said, I will pass it on to the Minister of Finance. I am sure that he will be quite interested in what the member for Gander had to say with respect to the accounting practices of the Province. The hon. member will have another opportunity, of course, in the debate to get up and further debate the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) with respect to that.

Members opposite now want to close the House on May 15, is that it?

AN HON. MEMBER:

No, no, no!

MR. SIMMS:

I am sorry.

MR. TULK:

That is when you will get Interim Supply.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, oh! I am glad the hon. member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk), the Opposition House Leader, now has finally made the annual threat that we always get with Interim Supply. He has made the threat. We will not get Interim Supply until May 15, he threatens. I suspect, Mr. Chairman, there are not going to be too many over there around May 15. I have a

funny feeling many of them will be preoccupied.

MR. FLIGHT:

The NDP have you targeted.

MR. SIMMS:

The NDP have me targeted, there is no question about that. The only person in this Legislature that will have a free ride in the next election, Mr. Chairman, is the member for Windsor - Buchans, I predict. He will have a free ride.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Where?

MR. SIMMS:

Well, that is another question.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the member for Fogo, the Opposition House Leader will get nowhere threatening the government, threatening the people of this Province, holding them up to ransom by suggesting that he will not let Interim Supply go through until May 15. Now the member for Fogo has tried that year after year, after year for the last seven or eight years.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

It is 5:30.

MR. SIMMS:

I will move the Committee rise, report progress, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the member for Terra Nova.

MR. GREENING:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered the matters

to them referred and has directed me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The Chairman of the Committee of Supply reports having considered the matters to it referred, reports progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion report received and adopted, the Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER:

We have three questions for debate on the adjournment. First is by the hon. member for Bellevue who is dissatisfied with the answer given by the Minister of Transportation.

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, during Question Period today, if I could have the attention of my colleagues and the gentleman opposite?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. CALLAN:

During Question Period today, Mr. Speaker, I asked three questions actually on the state or the mess that our roads are in, Mr. Speaker. I asked the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) when can we expect a secondary roads agreement to be signed with this great Tory Government in Ottawa that was suppose to inflict prosperity on us, but inflicted misery instead?

The minister had no answer to that, Mr. Speaker. He does not know when the secondary roads

agreement will be signed. So much, Mr. Speaker, for the threats that the Premier issued against the federal government a month or so ago. And so much for all the friendship and love that is suppose to have existed between the two governments, provincial and federal, of the same political stripe.

Mr. Speaker, I referred to the two towns of Bellevue and Thornlea. I might say in the last election, April 2, 1985, in that provincial election of 1985, here were the results: 80 per cent, Mr. Speaker, of the people in these two towns voted. Now, across the Province the Premier got 49 per cent. He lost 12 percentage points. In 1982 he got 61 per cent of the popular vote and then he asked for a mandate, he did not get the mandate, of course, because he lost 12 percentage points in April of 1985.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the Government House Leader (Mr. Ottenheimer) will pay attention and be civil, I should point out that in these two towns, the two towns that are asking the Minister of Transportation to upgrade and pave their roads for them this Summer, 80 per cent of the people there voted for the PC candidate and the PC party.

In Thornlea, Mr. Speaker, there were twenty-nine Liberals, seventy-six PCs in the last election; in the town of Bellevue, nineteen Liberals, 160 Tories, Mr. Speaker, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CALLAN:

- for a total of 236 Tories and forty-eight Liberals in these two

towns.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP, as usual, of course were insignificant. Actually, in Thornlea there were seven NDP voters and in the town of Bellevue there were only three for a total of ten.

Mr. Speaker, there is a reason for the minister. Two years ago the minister was on record as favouring his Tory friends. He said, 'it is easier to deal with friends than your enemies' but 80 per cent of the people in these two towns are friends of the Minister of Transportation and friends of the Premier and friends of the Tory Government. They showed it in the ballot box. Now, that is one good reason why they should reasonably expect to get pavement this year.

The other and more obvious reason, Mr. Speaker, in the thirty seconds that I have left, is the fact that, as I stated earlier in Question Period, there will be two paving contractors in that area for two or three weeks or a month this Summer repaving the Trans Canada Highway between the Whitbourne intersection and the Chance Cove intersection at Gull Pond, for a total of, I am not sure how many miles of pavement there are.

I commend the minister, Mr. Speaker, on laying all of that pavement in my district, I commend him, and, of course, for the construction that went on last year. Several millions of dollars was spent reconstructing the Trans Canada, getting it ready for that new pavement this Summer. I commend the minister but I say to the minister, while the paving equipment is in the area and because he has so many friends in

these two towns, him and his party, why not do the honorable thing, why not pay them back for their favours. It is especially easy to do because the paving equipment is in the area.

The minister, Mr. Speaker, on other occasions has said, 'Now, if a paving contractor were in the area, that would be a reason why we could do it but to bring it from sixty or eighty miles away is different.' But they are going to be right there on the doorstep of Thornlea and Bellevue.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister, when he stands, will say, yes, since the Question Period I have thought it over, I have talked to some of my friends in Thornlea and Bellevue and, yes, I have told them I am going to pave their roads this Summer and now he is going to make it public here in the Legislature.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) is a very dissatisfied person. He is dissatisfied with the answers that he received in Question Period, he is dissatisfied with his leader and now, it appears, he is dissatisfied with the voters in Bellevue and Thornlea, and it just goes on. He is a very distasteful person, Mr. Speaker, and dissatisfied as well.

Mr. Speaker, certainly the fact

that a number of roads in the Province, particularly one in the hon. member's district, on which I get representation from my colleague, the member for Torngat Mountains, who is in daily and sometimes hourly contact with the people in Bellevue district -

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

He should run in the two districts next time.

MR. DAWE:

Well, he certainly could. There is no question that he certainly could, but he has made certain arrangements to carry on a dialogue with individuals who concern have not been brought forward by representation from their member but have been brought forward by representation from the member for Torngat who has ancestral links to the historic district of Bellevue. Mr. Speaker, the question is a very serious one and I do not think the member addressed it in a serious manner. He rather superficially and superfluously addressed the question in a manner that is not becoming members of this Legislature as it relates to the attitude of voters. Every individual in the district of Bellevue and every individual in every district of the Province, has much to expect from the services provided by any government as any other individual member, no matter how they voted, which really does not make any difference.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, that is evident from what has transpired, particularly since 1971, when this administration came into power,

the Tory administration came into power and had to spend the past sixteen years trying to address the kind of pork barreling that not only went on from a district perspective, but the pork barreling that went on from a contracting perspective right throughout the Province. Some of the queries that the hon. member for Bellevue put forward relate back to the olden days that he can probably remember, when contracts were given out willy-nilly to friends. Unfortunately for the member for Bellevue, I suppose, and fortunately for the people of this Province, that is no longer the case and there is a Public Tendering process which addresses the concerns.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. DAWE:

Hon. members can laugh. I think it is more of a goof than a laugh, but they can go ahead over there because they know that is the truth and they have no other response to it but to make funny noises. The people of the Bellevue district and the people of many districts around the Province, Mr. Speaker, are deserving of much improved transportation circumstances, whether they be through ferry operations, through air transportation or through road transportation. It is a problem that is a difficult one, particularly in this Province, because of the kind of topography and the geography of the Province in general that we have to contend with, and it is one that requires large substantial amounts of funding both from the Province and from the federal government, and this relates to the second part of the hon. member's question about

the secondary road's agreement. Without the kind of cost-shared agreements that we have been involved in the past, the kind of cost-shared agreements where we are now addressing some of the major concerns of the Trans-Canada Highway, and some of them in the hon. member's district, that kind of a cost-sharing arrangement with the federal government is imperative if we are to continue with improvements in our ground transportation system. We are very quickly falling behind, Mr. Speaker, in a number of our roads. Paved inventory and roads that we have built up over the years are now being subject to major deterioration, and they need large infusions of money in existing paved road systems, so we are falling behind in that area and without a significant cost-shared agreement with the federal government it will be impossible for the Province to address that. So, with that in mind, Mr. Speaker, obviously I am working very hard in conjunction with the federal Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie), the federal government, and this administration is, to try and acquire a good secondary road's agreement that will alleviate many of the problems that we see before us in the Province.

MR. SPEAKER:

The second question is from the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) who is not satisfied with the road conditions in his district.

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, first of all to disspell, if I may get the attention of my good friend from

Tornгат Mountains (Mr. Warren), any malicious rumours making the rounds in the House because he and I are exchanging notes on matters, it is not that he is working on me to cross the floor or I working on him to cross the floor, as desirable as either of those circumstances would be, but we shared battles together and one of them was that at one time we had the distinction of being the only two elected parliamentarians in Canada who had the wisdom to support the hon. John Roberts for the leadership of the Liberal Party. So given the outcome of that particular competition, I am setting in motion some discussions so we can sit down and see what it was we did wrong in that particular competition.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to the subject at hand. This issue of roads needs to be addressed.

MR. J. CARTER:

By a Rhodes scholar.

MR. SIMMONS:

I am sure the gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) would not know what I am talking about. He has already bragged he gets at least a letter a year from his constituents and not only that, but I think he plans to read that one next year.

MR. J. CARTER:

A very complimentary report.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, the issue I put in Question Period and on many other times in this House, and in correspondence to the department and so on, is an issue that is of serious concern. I hear what the minister is saying when he says that they cannot do it all at once. That is not the plea being

put forth by those constituents or by me. What we are asking is that some fair play be injected into the process. We recognize, and the constituents who sent me here recognize, that there are not unlimited amounts of funding and that is all the more reason why the onus is ever on the minister to ensure that fair play and need are the guiding criteria. Now, he can snicker and he can sneer and he can deny all he wants, he knows full-well that the Public Tendering Act had very little to do with what he did over in Loch Lomond to get the pavement to a few buddies' cabins. When my friend from Bellevue (Mr. Callan) asked that some extensions be entertained to address some paving needs in his particular area, he was scorned by the minister for even suggesting that somehow we ought to do something that might or might not be within the letter of the law of the Public Tendering Act. If that is the precedent he is looking for, Mr. Speaker, in his own bailiwick, in his own backyard, I can show him where he and the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young) have jointly torn up the Public Tendering Act long ago.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he chides the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight), and attributes motives that he ought to be asking a question about this issue because perhaps there is a constituent in the gallery. Well, I can tell him that there were no constituents from my district in the gallery today, but, Mr. Speaker, while they were not here they were out there trying to get over those impassable roads - made all the more impassable by the neglect and callousness of this administration - out there risking life and limb, having to keep their youngsters out of school, having an

ambulance, only yesterday afternoon, Mr. Speaker, take a patient from the English Harbour area and by the time they got that vehicle and patient to the Harbour Breton Road, to the first bit of pavement, they had to second another ambulance to get that patient to Grand Falls because the first ambulance was damaged beyond the point of being able to continue the trip.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of diminished access to medical care I was talking about earlier. The time has come, Mr. Speaker, to do something about this. We know we cannot do much about the weather, but that is a red herring, that is a charade, that is a complete charade and I point, in particular, to all that crushed stone out there sitting appropriately at a place called Simmons Brook, a gravel pit, and it is sitting there, Mr. Speaker, and people are being told that has to do for the next three years.

Mr. Speaker, if it can alleviate some of the problems now - I do not mean this week in terms of road conditions, but as soon as it is dry enough and so on, and I think the minister understands what I am advocating here - I would hope that as a Band-aid solution at least, he would agree to having some of that applied.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, he chided those who would suggest that decisions are being made on the basis of how people voted. Well, on that matter, Mr. Speaker, we have his public words and I guess the best thing we can say to him on that matter is, "Physician heal thyself." Because he is well on the record, Mr. Speaker, shamefully so, as saying the very opposite of what he said in this

House today, that how people voted was a determining factor in what kind of goodies they got, what kind of services they got out of the Public Treasury.

MR. SIMMS:

He did not say that now, 'Roger'. That is not fair.

Mr. Speaker, we will get the exact words for him. But he knows too well the exact words. He knows the exact words already.

Mr. Speaker, the overriding plea is that something will be done. If need is the new criterion that this government has discovered, we give them an opportunity now to act on that new criterion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:

I had intended to just stand up very briefly and indicate that my previous answer would have been sufficient for this one, but there are a couple of things that sort of tweaked my interest, that being one of them.

The hon. member mentioned something about the Public Tendering Act not being addressed in a particular road contract that was issued in the great historic district of St. George's, dealing with an area known as Loch Lomond, and he indicated it was done because some friends of mine had cabins on the road. Two things: First of all, there was a public tender contract called, and

secondly, Mr. Speaker - someone may be able to correct me - I know there are a lot of cabins on that road, but I do not know anybody nor have I known anybody who owns a cabin there. If the cabin owners were there at the time that road was built, they were cabin owners who reside in the great historic district of LaPoile and were represented at the time by a Liberal member, and are now represented more adequately, of course, by the present member for LaPoile. If anything, they were people from another constituency who visit on occasion.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the farmers on Lock Lomond, the children on Lock Lomond who have to travel to school every day on the school bus, the many residents of that particular stretch of road are very appreciative and are the people that I represent and the people who made representation to me to have that particular section of highway completed, and that is what was done in that particular case. Apart from all that, Mr. Speaker, ditto to the first answer.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans is not satisfied with the answers he got today from the Minister of Transportation.

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today I stood up and outlined a situation that existed on the Trans-Canada Highway, between Grand Falls and Gander, on this Monday past. Now, by

coincidence, Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago I left Grand Falls - Windsor to drive to Gander to catch a four o'clock flight. That night there had been a very serious storm in Central Newfoundland. I just could not believe what I was seeing, Mr. Speaker. From Grand Falls to Windsor there had been no snowplow on that stretch of road. Now, the storm had stopped very early in the morning, and by three-thirty to four o'clock there had still been no plow. Now, I would have to ask, why? Where the plows down? Where there mechanical problems?

The minister's staff was on the radio suggesting that people stay off that stretch of road, but people were obviously ignoring it because they were not staying off; tractor trailers, lady drivers, school buses, all kinds of vehicular traffic.

Mr. Speaker, I came in here with the intention of raising that issue. I came in and got involved in other things and I did not, much to my shame, Mr. Speaker. Two weeks later, this Monday past, again I left Grand Falls to drive to Gander, sixty-eight miles, one of the most congested stretches of the Trans-Canada Highway in Newfoundland, and, lo and behold, Mr. Speaker, by four o'clock that evening no snowplow had left Grand Falls to drive towards Gander. The storm had stopped early in the morning and no plow had left Grand Falls to drive towards Gander, again the most congested section of road in Newfoundland, and traffic was heavy.

Mr. Speaker, I saw situations where people came within feet of head-on collisions. The only passable area on the road was a cut that cars had made. When they

were facing a tractor trailer coming towards them, to get out of the way they had to go out of that cut. They had to go into snow five, six, seven feet, slushy snow, Mr. Speaker, and therein lay the danger. Now, Mr. Speaker, it is up to the hon. minister to believe me. It is up to this House to believe me. I saw three cars leave the Trans-Canada, and thank God, Mr. Speaker, they left the Trans-Canada on the right side, they went off on the side the car was driving on and were not forced to go across into oncoming traffic.

At Lewisporte Junction, Mr. Speaker, there was a lady who had pulled off the road and was refusing to go back on that road. People were taking their lives in their own hands. Now, Mr. Speaker, it is a fact of life. The minister owed it to the travelling public of Central Newfoundland to either have that road plowed or have it closed. People were taking their lives in their own hands.

MR. DAWE:
Alarmist.

MR. FLIGHT:
Alarmist! The minister did not see how close they came to having accidents, but I witnessed how easily it could have happened! I mean, very simply plow the road. Why was the road not plowed? I am surprised, Mr. Speaker, at the silence of the member for Grand Falls on this particular issue. It surprises me, because chances are, the majority of the drivers on that road, going towards Gander that day, were constituents of the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms). And I am not being an alarmist, I am simply asking why? The minister owes it to the

travelling public of this Province, he owes it to this House of Assembly to tell us why, after two consecutive storms, no plows were moving between Grand Falls and Gander. Now, I heard the minister every other day on radio suggesting that we should buckle up, suggesting we obey all the rules. You know, he is so safety conscious yet he turns loose the motoring public between Grand Falls and Gander in unbelievable conditions.

MR. SIMMS:
You just said he asked people to stay off the roads.

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker, he did not ask it on this Monday; there was no word from the Department of Transportation.

Furthermore, the Regional Administrator and the regional staff are very competent people. They are, Mr. Speaker. They are. But something is going on. Either the funding necessary to continue twenty-four hour road plowing has dried up, or else the equipment is down. There is some reason the hands of that Regional Director were tied, Mr. Speaker, and the Trans-Canada Highway was not plowed.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to get into a fight with the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms), but he has just as much right to be concerned in this particular issue as I have. It could happen once maybe but not twice. The Minister of Transportation should stand in his place and give us a reasonable explanation as to why that Trans-Canada Highway was not plowed and why he was prepared to let the travelling public, using

that strip of road between Grand Falls and Gander, drive and face such dangers in unbelievable conditions.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. DAWE:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DAWE:
Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is an alarmist. If it was not for reported agonies through the media, the Opposition would not have a question. They feed on agony, Mr. Speaker, like you would not believe. What a bunch of agony bags. What a bunch of agony bags. I never saw the like of it. The hon. member stands on his feet in Question Period today, looks across at me and says, 'Why did you not tell people to stay off the road?' Now, Mr. Speaker, later this afternoon he gets on his feet and he says "Well, we heard the reports, the minister's office put out a report, 'Stay off the roads, but', he says, 'no one listened to it" -

MR. FLIGHT:
That was just one day.

MR. DAWE:
- including the hon. member. Now, Mr. Speaker, can you believe it? On the one hand he says, 'You should tell people what road conditions are like', I might point out, Mr. Speaker, and on the other hand, then, he does not listen, he is too good to listen. That is one of his problems not only in this Legislature but, obviously, outside the Legislature. The thing is, Mr.

Speaker, in four locations around the Province there are twenty-four-hour people on call manning phones, letting the general public know what road conditions are like in any part of the Province. There is an office in Deer Lake which addresses all the concerns of Western Newfoundland and the Northern Peninsula. They have a continuous update on road conditions, what they are like, where the roads may be blocked, where there may be a potential problem, what driving conditions are like, and it is a well used service, Mr. Speaker, by people who travel the roads on a frequent basis. The same situation is in Grand Fall, in Clarendville and in St. John's. There is an ongoing twenty-four hour update on just what road conditions are like, Mr. Speaker, it is well publicized, it is in the newspapers, and everybody who travels on the road is very familiar with it; it is a service we have had in place for a number of years.

Mr. Speaker, the supervisors and the foremen are responsible for the expenditure of the public pursue and they just do not go out and spend it willy-nilly, but, Mr. Speaker, there are no restrictions on them. They go and do whatever they have to do to make sure that under the circumstances road surfaces are in the best condition they can be.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the member indicated on two occasions, on one Monday and then in two weeks time on another Monday - if I can have the dates from the hon. member -

MR. FLIGHT:
Monday past.

MR. DAWE:

The deputy minister, by the way, drove over that particular stretch of road the same time as the hon. member did, and the hon. the Minister of Labour drove over that road, as well, that day, and, Mr. Speaker, the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) -

MR. BLANCHARD:

And we say two plows.

MR. FLIGHT:

You are lying right through your teeth. You are lying.

MR. BLANCHARD:

We left Grand Falls at 11:30.

MR. FLIGHT:

You are lying.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. BLANCHARD:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. Minister of Labour.

MR. BLANCHARD:

I am sorry. I apologize to my colleague, but I was just told I was a liar by the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) and I would ask him to retract that statement.

MR. DAWE:

Everybody heard it.

MR. BLANCHARD:

He specifically stated, Mr. Speaker, 'you are a liar'.

MR. FLIGHT:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon.

the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I know where I was. Mr. Speaker, I left Grand Falls 3:00 o'clock in the evening and there was no plow. The minister is lying.

MR. DAWE:

Oh, he said it again.

MR. SIMMS:

To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest, Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, if there was any doubt about it the first time - I am not sure if Your Honour heard it -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No, he did not.

MR. SIMMS:

he said it again the second time the hon. member stood on his feet, that moment. He is an experienced parliamentarian and should know that it is unparliamentary to call another member a liar. Surely he knows that that is not parliamentary. He did when he was getting up to speak to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, said, 'Yes, the hon. minister is a liar.' Now, Mr. Speaker, that member should be forced to withdraw that immediately or else he should be named.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I am not quite sure on that. I was under the impression that he made a comment like that. If so, maybe the hon. member would like

to withdraw it. But I am certainly going to look at it, and if he did, he will have to withdraw it tomorrow.

MR. DAWE:

If I may continue, the attitude just displayed by the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans is exactly the point that I have been making. It is the kind of representation and the kind of -

MR. FLIGHT:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! A point of order, the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

My point of order is very simple. I have one motivation here today and that is draw to the attention of this House the kind of road conditions that that minister and that member is allowing to exist in Central Newfoundland, nothing else. That is my motivation.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! I think the hon. member realizes that that is not a point of order.

Order, please!

The hon. minister's time has elapsed.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, by leave could I have one minute?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave!

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No leave.

MR. DAWE:

Oh, pity!

MR. SIMMONS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMONS:

If he promises to make it about roads, he can have all the leave he wants.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest, Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, before the House adjourns members would probably want to know what is planned for tomorrow. It is planned to continue with Interim Supply. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government House Leader and the Deputy Government House Leader, I am very proud and honoured to move that the House adjourn until tomorrow, Friday, at 10:00 a.m.

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

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Answers to Questions

tabled

March 19, 1987



GOVERNMENT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

ST. JOHN'S, A1C 5T7

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

March 5, 1986.

Honourable Erik Nielsen, P.C., M.P.
Minister of National Defence,
Room 209-S,
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Canada.
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Nielsen:

I write in support of a request from the Harmon Corporation that Stephenville, Newfoundland be considered as a suitable location for the proposed Atlantic area Sea Cadet Camp.

As Stephenville was formerly the site of a U.S. air base much of the military infrastructure is still in place and include excellent harbour facilities and a first class airport.

I believe that such a facility would be ideally located in Newfoundland which has 70 percent of the sea cadet population in the Atlantic Provinces. Of course, Nova Scotia would still have the air cadet training camp and New Brunswick the army cadet base.

I sincerely hope that serious consideration is given to the Stephenville location, since I believe the Province to be the logical site.

Yours sincerely,


HAL BARRETT,
Minister.

cc: Hon. John Crosbie, M.P.
Mr. Kevin Aylward, M.H.A.
Mr. James Cochrane