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***VERBATIM REPORT***  
*(Hansard)*

*Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush*

Thursday

[Preliminary Transcript]

2 November 1989

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):  
Order, please!

Statements by Ministers

PREMIER WELLS:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:  
Mr. Speaker, yesterday the hon. the Member for Port au Port asked if I were aware that allegations had been made that the Minister of Social Services politically interfered in the issuing of social assistance in the form of accommodations for a single able-bodied person. The hon. Member further informed the House that because of the personal attention of the Minister to the case in question, the Social Services client had his accommodations upgraded from, and these are his words "board and lodging" to a "furnished apartment."

In response to the question, I advised the House that I had no knowledge whatever about any such allegations, but I would check into the matter and make the results of my investigation known to the House. I have examined reports from four different officials, all of which was done by the Deputy Minister or arranged by the Deputy Minister of the Department of Social Services, and I am now fulfilling my commitment to make public the results of this investigation.

The incident to which the hon. Member referred involved a young

man, I believe he was nineteen, who had come to St. John's as a witness in the Hughes Inquiry. He had nowhere to stay, had no immediate source of income. On applying to the Department of Social Services for help, he had been referred to the Wiseman Centre, which is an institution for homeless men operated by the Salvation Army.

A newsman who had been following the Hughes Inquiry and knew of the circumstances surrounding the young man in question brought the case to the attention of the Minister. It was pointed out that the 19-year old client had suffered emotional stress as a victim of abuse at Mount Cashel, and that the group home atmosphere of the Wisemen Centre would not be appropriate accommodations in his case.

The Minister, after meeting with the newsman and the client, agreed with this assessment, and he requested his officials to make alternate arrangements as quickly as possible.

To quote from the report of the Department official directly responsible for expediting the action, "the Minister wanted appropriate living arrangements made for this young man (today) and that under no circumstances should the client be placed at the Wiseman Centre, especially in view of the circumstances under which he, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, (and I do not intend to use the man's name) returned to the Province."

Arrangements were made in accordance with Departmental policy to allow the client to move into a bed-sitting room. It should be noted that the reference to a "furnished apartment" made by

the hon. Member in the hon. Member's question, may leave a false impression with respect to the modest accommodations of a single-room unit known as a bed-sitting room. Likewise, the reference to "board and lodging" may not be entirely appropriate in describing the institutional facilities and services of the Wiseman Centre.

The reports from the Social Services officials involved, clearly indicate that the client, in the course of time, would have received the same attention with the same results without the Minister's personal interest in the case. However, the process was accelerated because of the Minister's request. And the officials indicate clearly that it moved more rapidly than it might otherwise would because of the hon. Minister's intervention.

Given the urgency of the situation, where the young man in question had no place to stay and obviously required some degree of privacy, and he had come back to testify at the Hughes Inquiry in these circumstances, I would suggest that the Minister acted responsibly and compassionately -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:  
- I would suggest that the Minister acted responsibly and compassionately, and he should be commended for his action -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Everybody gets an apartment.

PREMIER WELLS:

- rather than being questioned and held under suspicion, as the hon. Member for Port au Port and his colleagues on the Opposition side of the House seem determined to do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should add that that hon. Member, for whom I have the greatest regard and respect, acted honourably, asked to be relieved of his duties by reason of other allegations that were made, and he is now being made prey to unscrupulous allegations by a Member, without any basis for making such allegations, who want to prejudice the fair hearing of the matter that was raised on Monday.

It is clear Mr. Speaker, that we have learned on this side of the house not to give credibility to such allegations until they have been clearly shown to be true, and I say again Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services should be commended, not criticized in this office.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Mr. Speaker it ill behoves the Premier of this Province, on behalf of his colleague, the former Minister and Member for Port de Grave, to stand in this House and attempt to sanctimoniously give a lecture to Members of this House on how they should perform. We witnessed the performance of that honourable Gentleman when he was over here, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

There are Mr. Speaker, Members in this House today, who have been the subject of vilification by the old 'night crawler' day after day, when we were sitting on this side of the House, so do not stand up with your sanctimonious tone, wring your hands and say 'leave the honourable gentleman alone.' If he cannot stand the heat let him get out of the kitchen, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Now Mr. Speaker, there are certain facts - first of all the Premier did not have the good sense and the courtesy to give us a copy of that statement that he just read from, before he read from it - but that aside, Mr. Speaker, there are certain facts that can escape-

AN HON. MEMBER:

He did that.

MR. RIDEOUT:

- Mr. Speaker nobody from this side of the House interrupted the honourable gentleman when he was making his statement, I ask for the same courtesy from the people on the back benches on that side. Now Mr. Speaker, there are certain facts that cannot escape anybody here, the fact of the matter is, that the normal routine in 99.9 per cent of the cases, when assistance is requested for an able-bodied person in that kind of circumstance, that the assistance provided is board and lodging. That is a fact that is undeniable. It is also undeniable Mr. Speaker that the social worker whom this young gentleman and his friend went to, provided the normal assistance to that gentleman "Board and Lodging".

Fact number two, Mr. Speaker. Fact number three, that has not been denied by the hon. the Premier or the Member for Port de Grave, is that a person from the media, a high ranking person by the way from the media in this Province, and the young man concerned came to see the Minister. They were not satisfied with the "board and lodging" normal type arrangement that had been offered to this young gentleman, that is offered to 99.9 per cent of able-bodied people in Newfoundland and Labrador, they were not satisfied with that.

Who should have been the judge here, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, was it the Minister who should have been the judge? Was it the professional social worker who should have been the judge? Was it the media person? Was it because there was a high ranking, high profile media person in attendance? Anyway, be that as it may, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that they came to see the Minister. The fact of the matter is that the Minister sent his own political appointment, his Executive Assistant, with the media person and the young man concerned back to the social worker, to have the social worker's decision over-ruled. That is a fact. And that, Mr. Speaker, was the allegation that was made in this House yesterday.

That hon. gentleman has now been caught out in two instances so far, and let me tell the House Mr. Speaker there is more to come. The hon. gentleman might as well know it now, there is more to come. Our telephones are being rung off the hook the last couple of days, with people calling in with examples of how this hon. gentleman has used his political

clout and his political interference, as a Minister of the Government, to do things that are of a political nature in and around his District, and all over Newfoundland and Labrador. And we are not going to be muzzled, Mr. Speaker. That hon. gentleman is a prime example of an Opposition Member carrying out what he argued to be his responsibility. I can tell you, despite the sanctimoniousness of the Premier or the hon. Member, this Opposition will carry out its responsibility as it sees it should do it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. the Premier. The Premier indicated to the House yesterday that he intended for the Cabinet to make certain decisions today regarding the type of investigation the Government intended to set up around the matter that the Premier announced in the House on Monday concerning the former Minister of Social Services, the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford). I know there are certain protocols involved with having Cabinet orders signed by His Honour and so on, but we are not interested in that, Mr. Speaker. That is not the issue. I want to ask the Premier have Government decided what type of

investigation they intend to set up into this whole matter, and is the Premier now in a position to give the House the details of that investigation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, the Cabinet just finished meeting a few minutes ago. The decision was taken, terms of reference were prepared, and, in fact, as a courtesy to the Chief Justice, the Hon. Mr. Justice Goodridge, we sent a copy of it down to him to ensure that the terms of reference would meet with his approval. As soon as we have that indication firmly from the Chief Justice, a copy of the minute will go to the Lieutenant-Governor for approval and, with the consent of both sides of the House, I hope to be in a position to table it later this afternoon. I cannot guarantee that with certainty, but I hope it will be back from the Lieutenant-Governor in time to do that, and then exactly what has been decided by Cabinet will be made known to all.

MR. RIDEOUT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Premier's position in all this. I cannot see why there would be any reason why the Premier would not tell this - and we will co-operate with him later in the day, if he is ready to table the documentation - but could the Premier tell the House whether or not the investigation will be

structured under the Public Enquiries Act?

*Speaker*  
MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

No, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. RIDEOUT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Canadian Coast Guard is involved here, the Fisheries Loan Board is involved here, Eastern Shipbuilders, the member, who is a former Minister, and dozens and dozens of other people, will the Premier tell the House why this enquiry is not being held as a public enquiry? Is this an attempt to make it a sham so that the truth will never come out?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I do not expect any judge of the Court of Appeal is going to participate in a sham, and it is improper for the hon. the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that he would. The matter will be turned over, as will be seen when the Order in Council is issued. The whole House will see exactly what is there, and whatever public enquiry is necessary will be made. All of that will be made clear as soon as it has been approved. I really do not feel like perpetrating a discourtesy to both the Chief Justice of the

Court of Appeal and His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor by discussing the details before they have had an opportunity - it will be later this afternoon. Just wait a few minutes. I expect it will be here later this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, we are operating under the rules of this Parliament. This is Question Period. The Premier is not going to take the House on his back and get away with it, I can tell him that. We will ask what questions we like. If the Premier wants to answer, he can. If he does not want to answer, he knows he does not have to, under the rules.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask the Premier this: Why is it that this will be the first enquiry of this nature in fourteen or fifteen years, that I am aware of, if in fact it is set up, that will not have been set up under the authority of The Public Enquiries Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Let me cover the first comment the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Rideout) made. I made no quarrel about his right to ask questions. He can ask any questions he wants, but he has to accept the answers. I have the right to answer any way I want. My criticism was his casting aspersions on a judge of the Court of Appeal.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

AN HON. MEMBER:  
What damn foolishness.

PREMIER WELLS:  
That was my criticism, and let us not make any mistake about it.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, when we table the Order in Council, I will explain fully the position. And if hon. Members Opposition will give me leave this afternoon, as soon as we get it back I will do it this afternoon.

Thank you.

MR. HODDER:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:  
I have a question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding that the Premier's policy, as articulated both during and since the last Provincial election, is that there will be no political interference and no political patronage in the Public Service. Could the Premier confirm that this is the policy of his Government?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:  
Of course we are not going to participate in the kind of political patronage that the former Government, of which the Member was a Member, did. We would not think of doing that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Port au

Port.

MR. HODDER:  
Mr. Speaker, is the Premier aware that the former Minister of Social Services, the Member for Port de Grave, on June 6, while he was Minister of Social Services, hired the President of the Port de Grave Liberal Association to a position at the Whitbourne Boys' Home, which is an institution which was directly under his supervision?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:  
Mr. Speaker, I have learned not to accept the allegation from the hon. Member as having any validity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:  
If it does, I will take a look at it. I am not really concerned with it.

MR. HODDER:  
Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier may as well learn to accept -

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

I have not recognize the hon. Member, but I am going to. For the sake of Hansard, the hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:  
Mr. Speaker, the Premier had better learn to accept, because the Premier will find out that that is a fact. That position is held by the present President of the Member for Port de Grave's District Association. Does not the Premier believe that the enquiry should be broadened to look at all aspects of the

Minister's behaviour while he held that post?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, if there is a need to, I will take a look at the thing. I have no reason to feel any urgent need to, because the hon. Member demonstrated quite clearly yesterday the lack of validity in his allegations. So I am not going to get stirred up by these things.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question, as well, for the hon. the Premier. I would like to ask the Premier if he would explain the law and the regulations - since he is a constitutional law expert, I am sure he will be quite familiar with it - as they pertain to The Public Tendering Act concerning construction projects undertaken for Government and Government agencies. Specifically I want to ask him this: Is it not a fact that according to The Public Tendering Act regulations bidders who submit tenders without including their Provincial overhead allowance number - the POA number they call it - which indicates the local content of the company, are not even evaluated under normal circumstances and, in fact, do not qualify at all for the tender, they are automatically rejected? Is that not the law?

And is everybody treated fairly and equally in this regard?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, to be honest with you, I do not have the law in front of me, I cannot confirm it yes or no. But if I had the law in front of me yes, I certainly would. It may well be that what he stated accurately reflects the law, I do not know. But I just cannot pop that answer.

I do not know verbatim by memory every law or regulation ever passed in this Province.

MR. RIDEOUT:

You ought to know this one. You had your Cabinet deal with it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

It is rather surprising that the Premier would not be aware of it, because it is a matter that was dealt with by the Cabinet in total.

Let me ask the Premier this: Would the Premier agree that political interference by a Minister in a specific or individual tender is virtually unheard of, even though Federal Members of Parliament, MHAs, Local Community Organizations often make representations with respect to a tender? And, indeed, certain senior Government officials have said publicly that they cannot imagine any interference by Cabinet to award a contract to somebody whose tender has already been clearly rejected.

If he does agree that that is an



unusual practice, can the Premier tell us why the Cabinet awarded a contract to S. Buffett and Sons, from Burgeo, Bay D'Espoir, for a Hydro project, even though the Hydro officials had determined it was not the preferred tender and, in fact, had rejected that tender?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of questions there.

The first one, is it unusual that there would be Cabinet interference in the awarding of contracts? It probably was not unusual in the former Government, but it is most certainly unusual here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

The particular situation - I know what the hon. gentleman is talking about now, but I am going from memory and I need to have it refreshed in any detail that I mention, so with that qualification I will tell the House exactly what I understood happened.

Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro invited bids to do a certain piece of work. I do not even know how big it was. I do not remember now what it was. I do not think that it was a major piece of work.

MR. TOBIN:

It was still a public tender.

PREMIER WELLS:

Yes. They invited bids. When the bids came in, the lowest bidder - the lowest bidder - costing the taxpayers the least amount of

dollars, was a contractor, not only a contractor within this Province, but a contractor from the Bay D'Espoir area where the work had been done, in respect of which, hon. Members will remember, the Government had just decided that it would not transfer back to Bay D'Espoir, where it should have been left in the first place, the control center that that former Government took out of Bay D'Espoir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

Having just decided that we could not burden the taxpayer with the additional cost of doing that, this bidder, the lowest bidder, clearly, unquestionably the lowest bidder, had made the mistake of not getting - what is it called, a POA number?

MR. MATTHEWS:

A POA number, yes.

PREMIER WELLS:

Yes, a POA number - which was an acknowledgement that the bidder or the contracting company is a Newfoundland Company and entitled to Newfoundland preference.

So, under the strict rules, that contract could not be awarded to the lowest bidder, who was a contractor from Bay D'Espoir, who employed people in Bay D'Espoir, which has an horrendous unemployment rate, to do work in the Bay D'Espoir area, and they expect this Government to be so insensitive to the needs of the people that we would not intervene. Mr. Speaker, we intervened with great pride and we would do it again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, if I may, that I am absolutely delighted with what the Premier has just said. Absolutely delighted!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

And I will tell him why, Mr. Speaker. Because this, again, is evidence of political interference at the highest level, I can assure you. My concern is about fairness to others, not the issue the Premier was talking about, all that rhetoric about Bay D'Espoir and moving the Hydro project and all of that. It has nothing to do with that whatsoever. My concern is for others, others who have made the same mistake with the POA that he so flippantly passed off - nothing to it! - others who have lost contracts because they left out the POA.

Specifically, I want to ask the Premier this question, Mr. Speaker. What about E.W. Adams Limited, who had the lowest bid of all bidders for another hydro project, the same agency, in Bishop's Falls, where there is lots of unemployment, I am sure his parliamentary secretary would agree, and who had his tender flatly rejected for exactly the same reason, no POA. Where is the fairness and balance in that? Is this not political interference?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

It is very simple, Mr. Speaker, I never heard of it until the hon. Member just mentioned it. It was never brought to the attention of Cabinet. I never saw it appear before Cabinet.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS:

Another supplementary, if I may, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Can we then assume from the Premier's comments that it is only if a Member on that side, a Minister in the Cabinet, interferes and intervenes on behalf of somebody that that kind of a situation will be turned around, that from now on let the word go out to everybody who bids on construction projects, if they find themselves in the same situation, they have left the POA off their tender, contact the Minister of Transportation, contact the Minister of Energy, contact the Premier, and they will forget what the rules and regulations are and award the contract to you? Is that what he is saying?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

The answer is no, Mr. Speaker, and I will tell the House why. I do

not know the situation the hon. Member was just mentioning - the name - I do not remember ever seeing it being brought to the attention of Cabinet.

In the case of the one from Bay d'Espoir, the Minister of Mines and Energy brought it up and said, 'Here is the situation as far as Hydro is concerned. As it stands, they cannot award it unless Cabinet gives them special dispensation to award it. We gave them special dispensation to award it, Mr. Speaker, because it was the right thing to do in the circumstances, and I have no hesitation in saying it.

The answer to the Member's question is, no, you cannot say that anybody who does it can contact the Premier or any Minister or anybody else and get it set aside. The answer is no. We were faced, Mr. Speaker, in the case of Buffett in Bay d'Espoir, with a particular circumstance where, on the facts of it, clearly it was justified, and we would have been severely criticized if it had been brought to our attention and we had refused to deal with it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to you very clearly that we did it with great pride, and we would do it again!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Premier has said that, but methinks something stinks in the state of Denmark. That is what methinks!

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Me does not think.

MR. SIMMS:  
Me does not think! Only the Premier thinks, of course, and we all know that.

Mr. Speaker, let me ask the Premier this question: Will the Premier undertake to investigate the particular situation as it applies to E. W. Adams, Limited? Will he instruct his Minister of Energy to have a look at the possibility of recalling the tender in this particular case? Because it is very similar to what the Government and the Cabinet have done in terms of interfering in the contract with respect to S. Buffett and Sons. I ask the Premier that question, not the Minister.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:  
I will ask him to take a look at it, yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:  
Thank you.

MR. WINDSOR:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:  
Mr. Speaker, I, also, would like to ask the Premier a question dealing with Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro: Why has he or his Minister found it necessary in the last two days to unceremoniously fire the Boards of Directors of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, and of Churchill Falls (Labrador)

Corporation, and does that have anything to do with the advice they may or may not have given him in relation to this issue?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I do not know whether His Honour has seen the Order in Council, but that matter was also dealt with this morning; it may have already gone down. Anyway, the Member has announced it.

Why did we do it? I can answer that without being discourteous to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor. Mr. Speaker, to begin with, we did not unceremoniously fire anybody. In fact, the Minister of Energy telephoned every single one privately and had a conversation with them, and explained it, and frequently the response was, 'We expected you to do it because of the improper way we were put there in the first place.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

Because, you see, Mr. Speaker, last February or March, unceremoniously every single one was removed from the Board with a letter they received. Some did not know it until they read it in the newspaper or heard it on the news. Unceremoniously removed, people with competence, people with background and experience and knowledge in running Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro and in running CF(L)Co. And largely, Mr. Speaker, we wanted to be confident that Newfoundland and Labrador

Hydro was run with people with experience and knowledge of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro and CF(L)Co, so we reinstated, Mr. Speaker, the people who were unceremoniously removed by the former Government. That is what we did, Mr. Speaker -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

- to do what was right. There are two or three who were not reinstated, but largely the Boards were reinstated with people we had confidence in, who would give us, the Government, the kind of advice we need, and who had knowledge of the way it worked and the way it operated and its ability. But the former Government, under the Member who was then the Minister responsible, just holus-bolus cleared it out and put in people he thought might be politically attractive to him, without regard to the fact that they had no experience or background in the operation or running of a massive, massive public corporation with great consequences for this province. Mr. Speaker, CF(L)Co is the company that owns and operates Churchill Falls Labrador Corporation. They have competent, experienced people from Hydro Quebec dealing with matters of great concern, and the former Government just whipped all the experienced people out of that and put others in with no knowledge or experience. We have corrected that fatal error, Mr. Speaker, and in due course the individuals who were on the Board will be named, maybe later today or tomorrow.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I can see why the Premier would be so sensitive. Because we all know that he represented Hydro Quebec in their fight to take away Churchill Falls from Newfoundland. No wonder he is so sensitive.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

He is quite proud of that, too.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, far from unceremoniously firing the Board last year, the Board was replaced because most of their terms had been expired for six months, eight months or eighteen months. Some of them had been on the Board for nine and twelve years. That is why they were changed, in accordance with the policy our Government had of normally rotating the Boards every couple of years to insure that we had new ideas and good people on there, and also because we were concerned about the negotiations that the Minister is talking about. All these new things he is doing, every one of those were on the Table, Mr. Speaker, two years ago, long before the Minister took over. We want a good capable people, engineers, financial people and everything else. The answer the Minister has been getting is not 'we knew we were going to be replaced because of the way we were being appointed', it is 'we knew we were going to be replaced, because we were being perceived as political appointments.' The Minister just tried to say that -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order! Order please!

This is question period and I am waiting for the hon. Member to give the question, please.

The hon. Member for Mount Pearl

MR. WINDSOR:

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

I will get to my question. I am just trying to clarify a point in the Premier's response, that the reason the Minister was given was that 'we are being perceived as being political appointments', all except one, Mr. Andrew Crosbie, who said, "Holy God, I have been a Liberal all my life. Why are you firing me?" Why is that sort of person, a person of the caliber of Mr. Crosbie, who is so capable, and engineers and financial people who were appointed there, who do have good experience, why were they so unceremoniously dumped from these Boards?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes, why? Why?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

A very simple explanation, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member is trying to mislead everybody about rotating. Their was no rotation, it was a massive clean-out. Every single one with no -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

PREMIER WELLS:

Well, I will table exactly who was there and who was removed and who replaced them. That will all be provided. But, Mr. Speaker, there was no rotation. Everybody was

cleaned out and an entirely new Board put in place with no experience and no background in the field at all. What we did, Mr. Speaker, as will be seen, and here is why we did it, we put back the people who were there, with the experience. In the case of Hydro, for example, there were nine Members. We provided that three of the former Members who were there, who were unceremoniously removed, would go back for a year. Then we appointed three more for a two year period, and three more for a three year period, so that there would be automatic rotation every year; three would go out, and we could either reappoint one of those or appoint new members. We provided for a proper rotation so that you would retain experience and knowledge and competence on the Board, and run it in a proper businesslike way. We did it right, Mr. Speaker, and they are sore about it.

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:

I would like to direct this question to the hon. the Minister of Health (Mr. Decker). It is a question concerning Rochelle Scholl who has alternately been known in the Province as "Christina" or "Newfoundland's Mystery Girl". Last summer, for weeks on end, the details of Rochelle's arrival in the Province

and the subsequent events that were related to her circumstances and her identity were the subject of unprecedented media coverage, both locally and nationally. Now, it appears, Christina has left this Province and her departure has been cloaked in a veil of secrecy.

In view of the fact that I think Christina's circumstances were the subject of great concern and compassion by the people of this Province, I would like to ask the Minister to enlighten this House on the circumstances of her departure. Was she medically discharged? Did she walk away? Or has she been transferred to care in another jurisdiction?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I am totally surprised that the Member for St. John's East (Ms Duff) -

MR. RIDEOUT:

Has she gone?

MR. SIMMS:

Answer the question.

MR. DECKER:

- a woman of her calibre, would sink to the depths of asking such a question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MS DUFF:

Answer the question.

MR. DECKER:

A woman was in an institution, a woman was in the Waterford. That woman received all the care that we could give. She has a right, Mr. Speaker, to her privacy. If

the hon. Member herself were in an institution -

AN HON. MEMBER:

When she arrived here, every newspaper in Canada -

MR. DECKER:

I am utterly disgusted that a woman would sink to such depths and call herself a Member of this House, Mr. Speaker. It brings a shame on us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, yes!

MR. DECKER:

Here is a woman who was sick, ill -

MR. SIMMS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order. A point of order.

MR. DECKER:

- and now you want to smear her name in every newspaper in this Nation.

MR. RIDEOUT:

He is an idiot, Mr. Speaker. Name Him!

MS DUFF:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, I can handle it.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMS:

The response by the Minister is totally and absolutely uncalled for. I ask Your Honour to draw to the attention of Ministers that they are expected to respond and

answer questions. If they do not wish to answer them, then they do not have to stand and answer. But do not get up and sort of assassinate Members of the House or impute motives, because that is totally unparliamentary. I would not normally ask the Speaker to intervene during Question Period, but this is so totally uncalled for that it is absolutely unfair, and the Minister should be...

MR. RIDEOUT:

I have not seen that type of display in years.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

The Opposition House Leader, in what he said, obviously realizes that it is not the proper time to bring up a point of order. Where possible, we avoid bringing up points of order to kill the time of Question Period, and it is more properly brought up after Question Period, I think, by agreement from all sides.

Also, I would like to point out that the source of his concerns seems to be that the Minister of Health somehow imputed some motive to the Member for St. John's East. I did not see that, Mr. Speaker, in the response given by the Minister of Health. I did not see the imputation of motive.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Go down to Roddickton and collect your rent money.

MR. BAKER:

An imputation of motive, perhaps,

may be more in the mind of the hearer, the Opposition House Leader. I did not see any such imputation of motive. Mr. Speaker, it is not a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order. Of course, the Chair cannot direct Minister's to what a Minister ought to say in answering a question, and the Minister, as the Opposition House Leader pointed out, need not answer the question. What the Chair can do is to ensure that the same principles of asking a question apply equally to the principles of answering a question. In answering a question, the Minister ought not to express an opinion, give a representation, give an argumentation or get into the area that provokes a debate.

I would ask the Minister, please, to finish up the question, and answer the question in a more direct manner.

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have to confess that I did become angry at the caliber of the question. I will not answer the question, Mr. Speaker, on the grounds that I do not want to see this case plastered on every newspaper and every television in this Nation.

MR. RIDEOUT:

You made a circus out of it for months.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, that is what he did.

MR. WINDSOR:

He made a circus out of it. It is disgraceful. I never saw a Minister act like it before.

MS DUFF:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

In view of the fact that I think the Government House Leader is absolutely correct, and the motives are in the mind of the hearer and not in the mind of the questioner, and that I am neither to be bullied by the kind of attack on me personally that I have just heard; I have heard it (inaudible) -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:

- I direct my supplementary question to the Premier, from whom I might expect a more civil answer. I would like to point out in the first instances that I am very conscious of the need for confidentiality and was very, very careful in wording my question to ask for no specifics that could in any way damage the confidentiality in terms of this patient. I am motivated by concern for what is happening to this patient, because this young lady is known to be suffering from an associative disfunction. It has happened in the past, it may happen in the future, and I want to know if she has been abandoned to her own devices? Is she likely to turn up on the church steps in Montreal or Vancouver, or is she, in fact, in proper care in another jurisdiction? Have her next of kin been informed? Did she just disappear? Did she walk away?



SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:  
This is shameful! Sit down!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

MS DUFF:  
I will not sit down! What are the circumstances of her departure? Without specifics, how and why did she leave this Province?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:  
Mr. Speaker, I do not know the details of in whose custody she left.

MS DUFF:  
I do not need the details.

PREMIER WELLS:  
But I have complete confidence that the hon. the Minister would not permit her to be left alone on her own, as the hon. member implied might have been the case. She has obviously gone in the custody of some people. But if the hon. member wants to know, I will find out for sure. I have complete confidence that she has left in proper circumstances, and that the Minister has taken entirely the proper course. I also must support the Minister, although perhaps I might not say it with quite the same vehemence that he did, in suggesting that it really is not proper to be pressing publicity of the privacy of this patient.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
We want to be sure she is okay and getting good care.

PREMIER WELLS:

Well, the answer, I am quite confident, is an unqualified, yes. She is in good care.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Why could not the Minister tell us that?

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Because he is too much of a bully.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:  
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

Unlike hon. Members, Question Period has expired.

Presenting Reports by  
Standing and Special Committees

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

MR. GIBBONS:  
Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the report of the geological survey branch of the Department of Mines and Energy. This is the report that is being displayed today in our open House.

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

DR. KITCHEN:  
Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the annual report of the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation for 1988, in the red cover. I would like to call to Members attention while they are examining the report that the net income for the year 1988 was \$77 million, about half of which came from the operations of the liquor

stores and one half of which came from commission revenue on the sale of beer, each of which, is about the equivalent of one percentage point on the retail sales tax.

Answers to Questions  
for which Notice has been Given

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

The hon. the Member from St. John's East (Ms Duff), asked a question last Monday concerning the drug Erythropoietin. I wish to advise the House on the Government's position on the drug Erythropoietin. Now Mr. Speaker, from here on I am going to refer to it as EPO, because it is not the easiest name in the world to say. The matter was raised recently by the hon. Member for St. John's East. EPO is currently being tested in Canada for use in patients with anemia as a result of chronic kidney failure. This drug is still in the experimental stage of investigation in Canada and has not been licensed by the Federal Government for general use. The seven individuals who are currently receiving this therapy in Newfoundland have been participating in a clinical trial which was designed to assess the value of this drug. This clinical trial is a part of the assessment process of the Health Protection Branch of Health and Welfare, Canada. It is required before a drug is licensed for use in this country. This is standard procedure Mr. Speaker which is applied to all drugs. While they were participating in the clinical trial, the seven individuals in Newfoundland received the drug

free of charge from the drug manufacturer, the Province did not pay for it, it was given by the manufacturer. These individuals will continue to receive the drug until next week when the clinical trial is completed, at which time they will no longer have access to it, however, under the emergency release regulations of the Health Protection Branch, it is possible to obtain this drug on an individual case basis.

I understand that the drug can continue to be made available for these individuals under this provision but the manufacturer will no longer provide it free of charge.

I am pleased to inform the House, Mr. Speaker, that arrangements are being made with The General Hospital to cover the cost of EPO for these seven individuals on an interim basis while we await the outcome of the review and approval process of Health and Welfare Canada. I understand that a decision on this matter by the Health Protection Branch will not be forthcoming at least until the end of December and possibly not until well into the New Year. The cost of providing this drug is approximately \$600 per person per month.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of the provision of EPO leads us into the broader issue of the provision of high cost drugs for any patient in our Province. There are now more, very expensive drugs becoming available to treat a variety of medical conditions. When I refer to high cost drugs, I am referring to drugs that are very expensive - those that cost thousands of dollars per year - and which are normally prescribed for very specific medical conditions,

usually by a limited number of physicians who treat those particular conditions in a hospital setting.

My Department, and most health Ministers in Canada, are now trying to determine the most appropriate way to deal with this issue.

It is my intention that our review of this issue will take into account the role of Government, drug insurance plans and individual patients and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of this if hon. Members would like to have one.

Thank you.

### Petitions

#### MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

#### MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present. I understand that other Members of this Legislature have petitions that they should present. I think it is only our obligation as elected Members to present the petitions that are given to us.

The prayer of my petition is as follows:

"We the undersigned hereby petition the House of Assembly requesting that PCB incineration in Labrador be suspended until a National Conference of Scientists have determined beyond doubt that this is the only absolutely safe method of disposal. Until such a

conference is held this petition shall stand before you reflecting the fears and concerns of many Labrador people."

If the Speaker would like to look at this petitions validity I will pass it along and let him see it, but, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you, Sir, there are eight original signatures to the prayer of the petition and attached to the petition are 424 names. Copies of the 424 names have gone to the Premier, the Minister of Environment and Lands (Mr. Kelland), the Prime Minister, and I think it has gone to the Mayor of Happy Valley - Goose Bay.

Mr. Speaker, this summer the Department of National Defence undertook to transport PCBs from Cartwright and Saglek to Goose Bay, for incineration. Last week the portable incinerator arrived in Happy Valley - Goose Bay and it is anticipated, that some time during the course of the winter, those PCBs and also the PCBs that have been in storage in Happy Valley - Goose Bay for the past number of years, will be incinerated.

Mr. Speaker, 425 people have signed this petition. They are concerned that incineration of PCBs in a town, and I should emphasize this, Mr. Speaker, very, very clearly, the location of the burning of the PCBs is within - I think my hon. colleague from Naskaupi (Mr. Kelland) can confirm this - is within three or four kilometers of where people are living and where people are working. I think the concern is the PCBs are going to be burnt in such close proximity to where people are carrying on their daily activities, in living and working.

I am also concerned that there has not been enough evidence that PCBs can be incinerated in a safe manner. I understand members of the Council of Happy Valley - Goose Bay have travelled to Alaska and reviewed some activities with PCBs up there, and there has been other work done, but I fail to find any concrete evidence that PCBs can be incinerated safely. I want to go on record, Mr. Speaker, in saying that I do support the destruction of PCBs, but I am concerned on the location of the incineration. Surely goodness the Department of National Defence and this Government can order them to wait until they have more evidence to verify that the burning of PCBs in such close proximity to the livyers in the area, can be carried out safely. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, it is a concern, as expressed here by 450 people. I also want to say in concluding, I know I only have about a minute left, that I would hope this Government would not use Happy Valley - Goose Bay or Labrador for that matter, as a dumping site for PCBs from the Province or from other parts of Canada. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, if this should happen, you will get far more than 424 signatures, and I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the same would be true with other parts of the Island. I am surprised that the Minister has been advocating, in the past number of days, and the past number of months, that he is showing interest in having our Province as a dumping site not only for PCBs, but for other waste material. So I am concerned on the attitude of this Government and how far it is going to go in using the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador as a dumping site for waste disposal.

And with this in mind, Mr. Speaker, I support the prayer of this petition in saying, why can we not wait a little longer. PCBs have been in storage there for the last six, seven, or eight years, and surely goodness another three or four extra months can only assist us to determine whether this is going to be done in the proper manner or not.

Thank you, very much.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, very much.

I am please to have the opportunity to speak in connection with that particular petition. Not only is it a Ministerial concern of mine, or responsibility of mine, but also, the incinerator about to go into operation resides in my district as well. I should mention also, Mr. Speaker, that I am a resident of that district. I have lived there for almost twenty-four years and I am as concerned as anybody, as a resident, as an MHA, and as Minister. I am as concerned as anybody about what transpires there, particularly as it relates to the environment. I understand the source of that particular petition, but I have not seen the copy - although the Member indicated it was on its way - I have not yet seen it. The Member obviously knows, as he was a Member of the former Administration that was involved with discussions - and agreement in fact - that the incineration method in Happy Valley - Goose Bay at its present location, was the ideal means of permanently destroying PCBs that the former

Administration left in storage in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, despite local protest, for an excessive number of years. I do not know if he has had a change of position on that, Mr. Speaker, since he is now sitting on the other side of the House. He has not clearly indicated that. He seems to think, or I get the impression from the Member's comments, that he suffers severely from what is known as a NIMBY syndrome, NIMBY meaning, not in my backyard. He supports, he says, the destruction of PCBs and perhaps other toxic waste as well, but he does not want it done in his backyard. Now, if everybody in every jurisdiction in our country had the NIMBY syndrome, as the Member appears to have, how would we ever act in a responsible manner to rid ourselves of toxic waste such as PCBs?

The process by which the decision was made to put the incinerator on-site, and by the way it should start up and be up and running before Christmas, was done with a fair level of public input and public meetings. In fact I should mention to the hon. Member that the next public meeting is around, I believe, December 2, and there will be a tour arranged for anyone who is interested in looking at the facility. I think that our Province here, in conjunction, and in close co-operation with the Federal authority is taking a lead position in this. There is all kinds of technical evidence, technical information, and scientific information, that even though the hon. Member feels he is not competent to judge, the scientists can. The heat method, destruction by burning, is by far the most desirable technology available to us. I had the understanding from the former

Administration, of which the hon. Member was a Member, that they were in full agreement and full understanding of that. I state clearly, also, Mr. Speaker, that there is absolutely no intention, and there never was any intention by the former Administration, or by this Administration, to make Happy Valley - Goose Bay a permanent destruction site for PCBs in this Province, or other parts of Canada. He knows that as clearly as I know that, the hon. Member does. That facility never will be used for that particular reason. Only those wastes that were in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, those wastes which have been transported in from Saglek in the hon. Member's district, and those wastes in Cartwright which have already been transported into Goose Bay from my colleague for Eagle River's District, they will now, in the course of the next few months, be effectively destroyed by the burning method. The equipment will then be packed up. It is a transportable or mobile piece of equipment. It will be packed up, shipped out, the site restored, cleaned up, and decontaminated. Where I appreciate the concerns of the 420 people who signed the documents which I have not yet seen, I appreciate their concerns. They had ample opportunity to have their input into public meetings which were held openly for quite some time now and will continue, as I just mentioned, up to December 2 when the facility is opened for the general public, or anyone who has an interest. Perhaps, the hon. Member, if he has that kind of interest, will see fit to come into Happy Valley - Goose Bay in that time frame, and have a look at the operation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to support the prayer of the petition as presented by the Member for Torngat Mountains. There is no doubt in my mind that the Government has a responsibility to destroy its own waste, whether it is PCB's or whatever, I do not think that is the question or the prayer of the petition as I read it. However though, after having said that, I believe it is the right of every individual who lives in an area where the waste is destroyed, to be fully informed as to the ramifications of it, and that precautions and studies had been taken to ensure that no health risk is concerned. And that would go not only for the people in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, it would go for the people, I am sure, in Long Harbor or wherever the Mobile waste sites might be set up. So the people in question, the people who signed that petition, do have a concern, and have a right to be informed as to what, as I already said, the ramifications of this might be. So if that had been the case-

AN HON. MEMBER:

They would have nothing up there.

MR. LANGDON:

-well okay it might be as the Minister is saying, but it seems as if the prayer of the petition of these four hundred people is not satisfied. And until such time as there is one individual who is not particularly satisfied with the outcome of that, then probably there should be some other research or some information - educational information - given to these people to insure that

this is so.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for St. John's South.

MR. MURPHY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly it is a pleasure for me to have an opportunity -

MR. SPEAKER:

Is the hon. Member speaking to the petition?

MR. MURPHY:

Yes, I do not mind speaking to the petition, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Or presenting a petition, because this petition is over with. I am sorry.

MR. MURPHY:

I would like to support, Mr. Speaker, at this time, the position taken by the hon. Minister of Environment. I think it is extremely -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please!

We are only allowed three speakers in a petition, and we have had three Members speak. And unless by agreement of the House, unless by leave of the House, we cannot allow a fourth. But if the House agrees -

AN HON. MEMBER:

By leave.

MR. SPEAKER:

- by leave. The hon. Member for St. John's South.

MR. MURPHY:

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the other Members of this hon. House.

I think that we can get carried away with the demise of PCB's. What can be very serious in this present day and age is the tremendous impact that environmental studies and environmental material can have on all of us as legislators, not totally and technically understanding the ramifications associated with those particular products. I would agree with the hon. Members that there should be concern, and serious concern, as PCB's have been known to be and are proven to be cancer causing agents. But the format that is taking place in Goose Bay to demise the PCB's that have been left up and down the coast of Labrador - not only the coast of Labrador - but up and down the coast of Newfoundland as well, over the last twenty-five, thirty-five and forty years, is also extremely necessary. And the residents of Labrador would be much better off having the PCB's incinerated, at what has been confirmed by scientists, as a very safe level. And the reduction of the carcinogenic or cancer causing agent that is contained in PCB's are guaranteed to be destroyed under this process to 99.9 per cent. So, I would like to pass on to the hon. Member from Torngat that his concerns are well founded and well warranted when people do not understand, but I think the petition is certainly in place, as any petition is. But I would also like him to understand that he can convey that particular material back to his constituents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further petitions?

#### Orders of the Day

MR. BAKER:

Motion 2, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of information, if I might, at this point in time. I ask this question now for planning purposes, not for any other reason. The House, when it adjourns next Friday would normally not open on Monday, which is a public holiday; I think the November 11th. holiday is on Monday November 13. In view of the fact that November 14, Tuesday, happens to be Municipal Election Day, a lot of Members, on both sides of the House as a matter of fact, have mentioned to me that they are interested in being in their own constituencies to be involved and to participate in whatever way they can in School Board Elections and in the Municipal Election, and, indeed, to have an opportunity to be able to vote. When the House adjourns on Friday, would the Government consider returning on Wednesday of that week instead of Tuesday?

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We will take that under advisement and notify the House early next week.

MR. SIMMS:  
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Motion 2.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Development to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Amend The Economic Council Act", carried. (Bill No. 27).

On motion, Bill No. 27 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Development to introduce a Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department of Development", carried. (Bill No. 24).

On motion, Bill No. 24 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Amend The Quarry Materials Act, 1976", carried. (Bill No. 18).

On motion, Bill No. 18 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy to introduce a Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department of Mines and Energy", carried. (Bill No. 25).

On motion, Bill No. 25 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture to introduce a bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Forestry And Agriculture", carried. (Bill No. 19).

On motion, Bill No. 19, read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:  
Mr. Speaker, I know Your Honour enjoys going through the procedure and so on, but we have heard it so many times today, I wonder, for the sake of expediency, if the House would agree to do first readings of Motions 7 to 13 at the same time, and all bills be read through in one process. Can we do that?

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Do them at the same time?

MR. BAKER:  
Yes, Motions 7 to 13.

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker, as much as we, like the Government House Leader and Members on that side, love to hear Your Honour wax eloquently, we agree with respect to expediency. If there is a concurrence, we simply take all the Motions as if they had been read by Your Honour and had gone through the proper procedure, accept them, and put them on the Order Paper the next day as second readings. So we agree with that.

Motion, that all the Motions, from 7 to 13 be taken as read, carried.



On motion, the following Bills were introduced, read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow:

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act. (No. 2)". (Bill No. 15).

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act, 1973". (Bill No. 16).

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Finance". (Bill No. 21)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Environment And Lands". (Bill No. 23).

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Justice". (Bill No. 20)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The St. John's Municipal Elections Act". (Bill No. 22).

MR. BAKER:

Order 1.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

When I spoke in this debate last, and adjourned the debate on Monday, I was taking the opportunity to point out to the House why the Opposition felt at this point in time that it was appropriate to place before the House a motion of non-confidence in the Government.

We did not place the traditional non-confidence motion in the first sitting of this Session; we did not think it was appropriate. We

wanted the Government to have an opportunity to bring forward a plan and programs, and then we would judge the Government by its performance and see where it took us. But, of course, having, as I explained on Monday, watched the performance of the Government over the last seven months, there is ample evidence that the Government is failing in many areas, and it is the responsibility, therefore, of the Opposition to ensure that those areas of failure by the Government are debated in this House, brought to the attention of the public, and hopefully accurately recorded and reported so that the public knows how the Government is responding to public business. In that context, then, we brought this non-confidence motion before the House, on the Throne Speech, as is appropriate, to have it dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, before I return to the essence of my remarks on the non-confidence motion, I want to, first of all, address something that took place in this House today during Question Period. I can say truthfully that there have been times when I was a Minister in Government, or a colleague in the backbenches of Government, when one felt less than satisfied or less than proud about the performance of a colleague, the performance of a Minister, in particular. We are all human beings. None of us are perfect. We all fail from time to time.

MR. SIMMS:

Except the Premier.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Except the Premier.

We can all get up tight. We can all display human emotion and human reaction that is not

conducive to decorum, that is not conducive to good, solid parliamentary debate. But the performance by the Minister of Health in this House this afternoon, was the rudest, crudest performance I have ever seen by a Minister of the Crown, since I have been here. It is difficult, Mr. Speaker, for me to find parliamentary language to describe the actions of that particular Minister this afternoon. A very disciplined, honourable, dedicated Member of this Legislature stood, and respecting the confidentiality of a person, very quietly, without any razzmatazz that might be associated with Question Period, asked a very sensible question. Our concern, her concern, the public's concern, as we have been reading the public mood over the last twenty four hours or so, was simply one thing, did this particular individual leave Newfoundland to go somewhere else, escorted by competent staff, so that because of her condition she would arrive, wherever the destination is, safely and without any further incident. That was the only concern, that was the gist of the Member's question, nothing about confidential medical records or any thing of that nature, that was not part of the question. The question was out of concern for the individual who, it had come to the public's attention, had left the institutional care of this Province and had gone somewhere else. And the most arrogant, crude, insulting, rude response from the Minister was totally, absolutely, ridiculous, Mr. Speaker. It is a shame, it is an absolute shame, that a person in a position of responsibility would rise in this House and come back with the dirt and the innuendo and the savage personal attack on

another Member that we saw from that Minister this afternoon. It is totally unbelievable, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is exaggerated.

MR. RIDEOUT:

I do not care if it is exaggerated or not. The hon. gentleman has been here seven months Mr. Speaker, I have the experience of being here fourteen, almost fifteen years. I have never seen it from either side of the House - I say to the hon. Gentleman - the kind of crudeness, the kind of arrogance that went on here this afternoon in response to a legitimate question from a Member of the Opposition, and it is not going to go unnoticed I say to my hon. friend from Placentia, it is not going to go unnoticed, we are not going to allow it to go unnoticed.

MR. SIMMS:

They do not really like it either, they do not really like it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It was a two-way street.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Absolutely it was a two-way street, and what was wrong with the first part of the street, i.e. the Member's question?

MR. SIMMS:

Nothing, they do not really like what happened, none of them like what happened.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, this House will not function very well if we are to expect that kind of response from Ministers of the Crown, in fact it will not function at all. Oh sure, we will get through the

order paper, we will get through the orders of the day, and we will survive politically, or we will hang collectively politically, but this House will not be productive. I do not expect it to be a court room, I do not want it to be a court room, it is a Parliament and we have to expect that there is going to be hot issues, emotional debate, we have to expect that there is going to be a cut and a thrust to the debate. I do not want us to be like judges down in the court of law, that is not what this is, it is a Parliament, and it is an adversarial system, where we are political opponents of the Government and they are political opponents of ours, we expect to have voices raised from time to time, we expect the Government to be defensive, you expect the opposition to be aggressive, that is what it is all about, but we do not expect personal, cowardly attacks by Ministers on Members of the Opposition when they are trying to do their job. We do not expect it. I will get to him in this I will get to him - in this House 'him' happens to be the hon. the Member for whatever district he is - but I will get to him, the once, Mr. Speaker. I am dealing, first of all, with the Minister of Health, and it was a display that I hope we do not see in this House again. If the Minister does not want to answer a question, he does not have to. There is no rule in the book to force a Minister to answer a question. But, for God's sake, if you are going to have the intestinal fortitude to get on your feet and respond to it, at least try to do it in a human fashion with decency and civility, and that is not what we saw here today.

Mr. Speaker, the Government

benches over the last few days have been squirming, and so they ought to squirm. They ought to squirm, both the front and back benches, Mr. Speaker. Because we have here today in this Legislature, a seven-month-old Government, a Government that should still be on a tremendous honeymoon with the public of this Province, a Government that is brand new, a party that is brand new in Government. They have not been tarnished by the stresses and the rigor of governing for seventeen years. A party that you would think would be full of vibrancy and new ideas, eager and rushing to get on with the job of governing this Province. Mr. Speaker, if that is the will of the people, that satisfies me. But, what we have seen, Mr. Speaker, to date, sadly to date, what we are beginning to see already, after only seven months, a Government that is already rotten at the core. It is a Government that is already tarnished, Mr. Speaker. There was all kinds of fun made of Prime Minister Mulroney when his Ministers started getting in trouble within months of taking office. But to expect that you would have a Minister having to resign so that a commission of inquiry could carry out an investigation on his activities, after only seven months in office, you would not dream it in your wildest dreams, Mr. Speaker, particularly when the individual involved is not unexperienced, not brand new to the scene, knows the political lay of the land. You would not expect it. But it has happened. Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman, I hope, will take seriously what I said.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen already after only seven months, a

Government that is quite prepared to break the law of the Province when it comes to public tendering, and to do it in a fashion that favours some and does not favour others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

If you are going to change the law, change the regulations, so that it applies to everybody, that is one thing.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Watch your back, now.

MR. RIDEOUT:

I do not have to worry about my back, but I would not want to be the Premier with the Minister of Health in my Cabinet, I can tell you, after his performance here today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

We have seen a Government that will use the authority and the power of Cabinet - I do not even know if they have it, quite frankly, under The Public Tendering Act. A long-term senior civil servant in this Province, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Works, Services and Transportation, was quoted publicly as saying he never saw the likes of it in his twelve years in the Public Service. Awarding a contract when a firm should have been rejected because they did not meet the qualifications. And then, to allow that to go forward on the basis that the Premier tried to justify today, but not allow to go forward from the same Crown agency, another tender that was in

exactly the same situation. The lowest bid, saving the taxpayer the money that the Premier was concerned about today - and so he should - hydro project, high region of unemployment in the Province, but it lacked one thing. It lacked the same one thing that the Cabinet had overturned previously, and that was the POA number. That is what it lacks. In every other respect, both tenders were exactly the same.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Why did he not ask the Cabinet?

MR. SIMMS:

Why should he have to? It is either the rule or it is not.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Why should he have to ask the Cabinet? It is either the law of the land and it applies to everybody equally, or it should not be done at all.

MR. SIMMS:

It should be changed. It should be changed so it is an even playing field for all business, for all contractors anywhere in the Province, so that they are all on a level playing field. You cannot do it piecemeal, one at a time. That is the point, Mr. Speaker, and Government has chosen not to do that. That is the hydro situation.

MR. SIMMS:

If Grimes had been in the Cabinet he would have brought it up, because you have to know a Minister, I guess, or something like that.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Not every contractor in the Province, unfortunately, or fortunately, whichever side of the debate you want to take, is

necessarily a personal friend of a Minister and can call up the Minister and say, 'Look, I lost this contract because of this foolish old POA number. Now, I know Cabinet has overruled that before. Would you have Cabinet look at mine?' That is not the way our system works. It would work that way if the contractor knew somebody, but if he does not, he is caught out, and that is why you have laws and regulations under The Public Tendering Act, so that each business in the Province is treated equally. That is why the system is put in place.

Mr. Speaker, I want to come back to the situation that the Member for Port de Grave finds himself in. And it is relevant to this non-confidence motion that is before the House right now. The Member was a Minister when the allegations that have been made, came to be. Now, Mr. Speaker, when those allegations first came to public light in this House on Monday, I believe that this party and this Opposition acted in a very prudent and competent manner. Because we had not seen any written allegations, we gave the Premier the benefit of the doubt in his removing the Minister and asking for some kind of an inquiry. We might find out before the day is over what type of inquiry it is. But we gave the Premier full marks. We did not criticize because it was the Government, or because it was a Minister getting in trouble. The Hansard will show clearly and unmistakably, Mr. Speaker, that I, speaking for this side of the House, gave the Premier full marks for acting quickly, in our view acting prudently, and hopefully, having the matter cleared up as quickly as possible for everybody's sake.

I made it abundantly clear at the time that we take no joy in seeing another Member or Minister getting himself in hot water. If he does, then we have a responsibility to deal with it, but it is not what we go to bed dreaming about at night and wake up thinking about first thing in the morning.

But, having let the time pass, Mr. Speaker, and having gotten a written copy of the allegations, having had other people, as I said in this House earlier today, dozens of them, calling our office and feeding us information about the actions of that particular Member while he was a Minister, I can tell this House, Mr. Speaker, without any fear of contradiction, let not the Government think for one minute that we do not intend, as the Premier would say, to discharge our responsibility, too. Because we have a responsibility. If there is evidence of political interference in the business community in this Province that affects forty or fifty jobs, affects a Newfoundlander, a company owned by Newfoundlanders, if there is evidence of political interference, Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to bring it forward. And I can tell this House now that we will do that. We are not going to be scared off or frightened off by any individual over there, and that goes for the Premier, on down, I do not care who it is.

This particular case, Mr. Speaker, is crying out for a proper investigation. This particular case is crying out for a proper investigation. You have allegations against the then Minister that are serious, serious indeed. You have the involvement of the Canadian Coast Guard, you

have the involvement of the Fisheries Loan Board, you have the involvement of the Marine Institute, you have the involvement of a group of experts from the United States in the coding that was used on the vessel, you have the individual concerned, you have two fishermen who have already signed affidavits that the boats they have, built from the same mold and the same model, by the same group of people, by the same company, are perfect vessels.

All this information and allegation is now there in the public domain, and therefore, Mr. Speaker, it cannot, and must not, be handled in privacy in a closed door investigation. Everybody who has a story to tell, evidence to give, information to put on the public record, must have an opportunity to do so, and I hope that the Government will settle for nothing less. I cannot say that they will and I cannot say that they will not because the Premier has not told us yet. We have questioned him and I hope they will settle for nothing less. We have seen judicial enquiries, Mr. Speaker, set up by Governments in this House over things like TV sets. We have seen judicial enquiries set up in this House over a number of much less serious allegations than is before the House in this particular case, much less serious, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I remember some.

MR. RIDEOUT:

You remember now, do you not? Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is incumbent on the Government to ensure that the investigation is open, to ensure that it is complete, and to ensure that

anybody and everybody who has an expertise and evidence to present, presents it. That is the only point I am making, and I really think, from the answers the Premier gave us yesterday, that will be the case. I was kind of hesitant in the answer he gave me today, I know there are certain protocols that must be followed before he can lay the information before the House, but if it is not an open public enquiry, then it will not do what must be done, in this case, in my view. And I can assure the Premier and the Government, that we will have more to say about it once we know for a fact what type of enquiry and what type of investigation, has been set up.

Mr. Speaker, on this non-confidence motion, there are a number of groups of people in this Province who have every reason to lack confidence in this Government, a number of groups. Mr. Speaker when this party was in Opposition, I remember well, day after day, week after week, month after month I suppose, that party in Opposition screaming about hospital bed closures, and they published their policy platform, Mr. Speaker, during the election process, which dealt with their policy on hospitals and hospital bed closures. In the first opportunity they had, Mr. Speaker, we saw the Government really do the total opposite of what they preached from the Opposition benches, and what they preached during the election process. Not only were there hospital beds closed down throughout this Province this summer, as there have been for the last several summers, but whole hospitals were closed. The gentleman who now finds himself as the Member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) would

spend day after day, from this side of the House, going after whoever the particular Minister of Health might be in those days, talking about the hospital bed closures. Well, we have seen the response of this party, Mr. Speaker, as Government, to hospital bed closures, whole hospitals closed in Grand Bank and St. Lawrence, whole hospitals. Not only that, but you have permanent bed closures in other areas of the Province. What is it? Ten, I believe, out in Springdale, and sixty eight, or something out in Corner Brook, on the West Coast of the Province. Then you have the Minister of Health going around the Province talking about his gas station approach to medical facilities in Newfoundland and Labrador. I believe he kind of used that exact language in one of the local newspapers, that people will go to something like a service station where you will get an X ray taken, or blood test taken, and if there is anything further required after that then you will be sent to this large regional centre in St. John's, Corner Brook or whatever. The whole Medi-Care system in this Province in terms of hospital care is under total review by this Government, and God knows what kind of system will come out at the end of the day.

But, I say to the hon. gentleman for Exploits, do not have blind faith, because that is not the message that was preached in this House when his party was over here, nor was it the message that was preached to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador when they were seeking to go over there, as they did. So, Mr. Speaker, we do not know, the public does not know, and the public have a right to know what

kind of hospital system this Government has in mind for this Province for the next decade, for the next ten years. Certainly we can plan in five and ten years stages.

Mr. Speaker, when the Government was on this side of the House and when they were campaigning in the election, they spent a great deal of time talking about the Student Aid System in Newfoundland and Labrador. There is no doubt about it, the Student Aid System needs a complete overhaul, in my view. I do not think it has been overhauled from a Canada Student Loan perspective since 1967 or 1968, and it has not been overhauled from a Provincial grant supporting system for at least five or six years. So the Student Aid System in 1989 and heading into 1990, into a new decade, Mr. Speaker, is out of whack with the reality of that new decade, there is no doubt about it, and it is crying out to be overhauled, it is crying out to be reformed. But what kind of reform and leadership did we get from this Government, Mr. Speaker, who talks so much about fairness and balance and a proper Student Aid Program and a proper Student Aid Plan? We got a whopping ten per cent hike in tuition fees, without any corresponding increase in the student aid package to offset that. So every student, every parent in Newfoundland and Labrador got slapped with another ten per cent higher cost for post-secondary education, without the Government doing anything to offset that increased cost. That is the reality of what happened, Mr. Speaker, so I can tell you that students, hundreds and thousands of them, have every reason to have no confidence in this Government. Parents,

thousands of them, have no reason to have confidence in this Government.

Mr. Speaker, the amalgamation question: Did we hear any public debate generated by this Government when they were in Opposition? Did we hear any public debate generated by this Government, when they were participating in the election, about amalgamation? I say, Mr. Speaker, there was not a word, there was not a peep, there was not a squeak, not a whimper about the whole issue of amalgamation while that party was over here. In fact, every now and then, if the Government of the day was trying to do something to bring closer co-operation to the north east Avalon, for example, it was vicious from this side of the House: 'You cannot touch that. You cannot touch Wedgewood Park. You cannot touch this place. You cannot touch that place!' Day after day we were putting up with it from this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, when they were over here. The Minister of Finance should go and check Hansard and see some of the municipal critics of the day.

But suddenly, Mr. Speaker, they are the Government, and suddenly amalgamation descends like a ton of bricks on Newfoundland and Labrador. It had not been mentioned during the election, and without any warning, without even the foresight to say, well, perhaps, we will begin a year from now to look at trying to bring about closer co-operation and even amalgamation: give people a chance to think about it, give the municipalities a chance to debate it, give the elected councils an opportunity to discuss it and think about it and come to the

Government and sit down with them, without any of that, one of the most arrogant acts ever performed by a Minister within days of taking office - I am sure if he had found his office, he never had the seat warm - that Minister had 117 - well, more than that, he had practically every municipality in Newfoundland on a tightrope.

They were up in arms, they were in uproars, they did not know, he did not know, he did not have a plan and then, after five or six weeks, he comes out with a plan for bringing 117 municipal entities in Newfoundland and Labrador down to forty-one, I believe it was. So that was the first act of the new Minister, Mr. Speaker.

When did we get this grandiose scheme of amalgamation? We got it, Mr. Speaker, when most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were worrying about the bit of sun and nice weather we might get in July and August in this Province, and they were worrying about a bit of fish, if there was going to be any in their traps and in their nets. It was the last thing on their minds, Mr. Speaker, and that is why the Minister did it. But the Minister got some fright. I will tell you, if you ever saw anybody been hauled in line when the Premier got back from his vacation, the Minister was certainly hauled in line. I have never seen a Minister have the legs chopped out from under him so quickly and with such hard slashes as did the Minister of Municipal Affairs when the Premier got back in the Province, after a couple of weeks rest. The cat-o'-nine-tails had nothing on him!

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was bad enough. Then, of course, the Minister was hard. It was very



difficult to get the Minister off the amalgamation track. Even the Premier, who has such tight-fisted control of the Caucus and the Cabinet, the iron-willed person himself, had great difficulty reining that Minister in. The Premier had to personally assure certain municipalities in this Province that if they did not want amalgamation, if they did not want to participate, then amalgamation would not be forced on them by the Minister or the Government.

So, Mr. Speaker, the credibility of the Minister was totally gone as a result of that process. Tarnished forever, Mr. Speaker. The Premier and the Minister even disagreed in this House again yesterday over the whole question. They still have not got their act together on the question of amalgamation. The Minister is bullish, dogmatic, determined, hell-bent to leather to do it, and get it over and done with. Resettlement all over, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier is determined to try to bring some political sense to it all - trying. And yesterday we saw again the difference in attack and the difference in approach between the Premier and that Minister.

Certain municipalities in this province now, Mr. Speaker, who were on the list of 117, have been taken off the list because they have said categorically they want nothing to do with amalgamation. Wabush, Labrador City, Steady Brook, those communities have been taken off the list because they said they want no part of the amalgamation process. Here is another example of fairness and balance, Mr. Speaker - you almost get nauseated listening to this Government. Other communities have been equally as staunch in

their opposition to amalgamation and they are left on the list. You can name 100 of them. And some of them are going ahead with their elections. Wedgewood Park, Mount Pearl, a whole host of them around the Province, Massey Drive, Pouch Cove, Bauline, Flat Rock. Dozens and dozens of them, Mr. Speaker, have said, We want nothing to do with this amalgamation process, and I do not suppose we will have to have anything to do with it will we, Mr. Rideout? Will we, Mr. Doyle? Will we, Mr. Hearn? We will not have to have anything to do with this if we do not want it, will we? The Premier said we will not have to. Yet, the Minister insists that they continue with the studies in those communities at taxpayer expense, in communities that clearly do not want it. Now, if that is not a double standard, Mr. Speaker, a double standard again being perpetrated on the people of this Province by a Minister who totally lacks any appreciation for the heart and soul of Newfoundland and Labrador outside the overpass.

He has no understanding of a situation in Green Bay, where they are trying to force amalgamation between Triton and Brighton and Pelley's Island, who are joined together by a Ferry System, who are miles apart, who have nothing in common, except that they live in the same geographic part of Newfoundland and Labrador. He has no appreciation for trying to force amalgamation of a number of communities on Fogo Island.

MR. SIMMS:

Resign, boy! Resign!

MR. RIDEOUT:

No appreciation whatsoever. And I know for a fact that one of those

particular councils asked him and he said he did not.

MR. SIMMS:  
Oh!

MR. RIDEOUT:  
He said he had no appreciation for it.

MR. SIMMS:  
Oh!

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Yet, he would plunge blindly on, Mr. Speaker: I will lead until the Premier comes back and cuts the legs out. We are going to proceed with this, because it looks like a nice urban thing to do.

MR. SIMMS:  
Where I lead him, Clyde will follow.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Mr. Speaker, the amalgamation issue has been a blot on the record of this Government to date. A big blot. Their one big initiative. And I say to the Minister and to the Premier, it is going to be a bigger blot on the record of this Government.

MR. SIMMS:  
The Government is full of blots.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
It was never mentioned in the election campaign, it was never mentioned when they were over here on this side of the House. The Premier's own brochure - Patricia Starr money, I suppose, helped get this printed - about all their initiatives in fisheries and agriculture and labour and hydro, and all of that -

MS VERGE:  
What about Meech Lake? Is Meech

Lake in there?

MR. RIDEOUT:  
No, there is no word in here, Mr. Speaker, on municipal amalgamation. This was their platform. Mr. Speaker, there is no word in here on Meech Lake.

MS VERGE:  
That is strange.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
There is all kinds of talk about cucumbers and all that kind of thing, but nothing in here about Meech Lake.

So this Government, Mr. Speaker, had two agendas. They had one agenda that they thought the people would find acceptable -

MS VERGE:  
Like keeping hospital beds open.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Like keeping hospital beds open. They had another agenda, Mr. Speaker, they knew the electorate would not find acceptable and, therefore, they did not put it forth, like closing hospital beds, like municipal amalgamation, like a 10 per cent hike for students at the university or post-secondary institutions without reforming the student aid system, like, Mr. Speaker, the elimination of the rural electrification subsidy, and now every rate payer in Newfoundland and Labrador, over the next three years, is going to see a tremendous increase in their electricity bill. That subsidy was - what? - \$30 million? Something like that, \$27 million or \$30 million. That subsidy will come off over the next three years, so the Minister of Finance said in his Budget Speech, and that means that because that comes

off and that money is not being turned over to the PDDs by the Treasury, by the Government, in other words, the rates have to go up, because the PDDs cannot absorb the \$27 million. That is exactly what it means.

The people in this Province do not know that yet, Mr. Speaker. But they will begin to find it in their utility bills next year and the year after and the year after, which might be the magic year, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps it is a good year for them to find it, three years from now. Perhaps it is a good year for them to find it, because, Mr. Speaker, the arrogance that we have seen from this group, who should still be on a honeymoon with the public, is unbelievable. No Government has fallen so far in seven months.

MR. GOVER:

How about the Rideout administration?

MR. RIDEOUT:

It only had forty-three days. It only had forty-three days. No Government has fallen so far in seven months, Mr. Speaker. No Government.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You still won the popular vote.

MR. RIDEOUT:

That is right.

Let me say this, Mr. Speaker: What really bothers me the most is the arrogance that I see on the faces of the supporters of this Government. It does not matter what it is, if it is fishery, if it is Meech Lake, if it is amalgamation, if it is education, or if it is hydro, it does not matter what it is, we can do no wrong. I mean, when you are

talking to them as colleagues and friends, they exude this feeling, we are over here and we are set there.

MS VERGE:

Sanctimonious!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Sanctimonious! We are seated comfortably in the Seat of Government, and we are going to stay there. Well, Mr. Speaker, the electorate will make that decision. They may be right, Mr. Speaker. They may very well be right, but that particular decision has yet to be made. And governments that survive, Mr. Speaker, are Governments that have this in-built desire to be solid performers.

AN HON. MEMBER:

How would you know?

MR. RIDEOUT:

Well, we survived for seventeen years. How would you know? You only have seven months in yet.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Oh, I learned that lesson from the Minister of Fisheries, how to survive.

AN HON. MEMBER:

For forty-three days.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, they can poke all the fun they like. It does not bother me about forty-three days or forty-five days. I am quite proud to have won the Leadership. I went to the people for a mandate. It did not work out. So I am Leader of the Opposition. I might be here for the next seventeen years as Leader of the Opposition,

or I might be seventeen years leading the Government. Who knows?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

You see that is the difference, Mr. Speaker, between a mentality that says, we are over here now, boys. We are comfortable here. You are never going to have another shot at it. We are doing everything perfect. We are not listening to your advice. We are not listening to the people of this Province. We have our agenda. We will deliver on our agenda. And if the people do not like it, they can lump it. That, Mr. Speaker, is the recipe for a one-term Government and that is exactly what this Government will be, a one-term Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Snow):

It being 4 o'clock and Thursday, I will announce the three questions for the Late Show. The first question is from the hon. the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren). He is not satisfied with the answers received on the low level flying. I think that question was directed to the Premier.

The second question is from the hon. the member for St. John's East Extern. I am dissatisfied with the Premier's answer to my question concerning the resignation of the Minister of Social Services.

The third question: I am not satisfied with the answer from the Minister of Health on my question related to Rochelle Scholl - Christina - therefore, I ask leave

to debate this question. It is the hon. the member for St. John's East. These are the three questions for the Late Show this afternoon. Thank you.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, with the permission of hon. members opposite, I believe the question asked by the hon. the member for Torngat Mountains was directed to me. I did not bother to try to answer it because I did not have the details. The Government appointed a Committee, headed by the President of the Council, made up of the Minister of Education, the Minister of Environment and Lands, and the Minister of Development. They know it, they have been dealing with it in detail, and he is the appropriate one to answer it. So I will not be dealing with that question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WINSOR:

Mr. Speaker, we do not have any problem with that. Obviously, if the President of the Council is here to answer that particular question on behalf of the Government, that is fine with us.

MR. SIMMS:

The Minister of Municipal Affairs can answer it if he wants to.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The question itself did not say who it was directed to, so I was looking for direction.

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

MR. MURPHY:

Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

It is extremely difficult for a new member in this Legislature to

follow such tremendous oration. I would suggest to the hon. the Leader of the Opposition that this Government never had the opportunity to be on a honeymoon; we walked into seventeen years of a honeymoon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

Mr. Speaker, I think the non-confidence motion was answered, and I know when it was answered, as do all Members in this House, on April 20. That was the non-confidence motion that was answered and answered well. However, we have a motion of non-confidence presented by our friend, the hon. the Member for Grand Falls, Leader Number 2. I suppose the thrust of that motion would be that the Throne Speech that was presented in this hon. House, in their opinion may be very difficult to finalize and, I suggest to all hon. Members, that that is not the fault of this new Administration.

If we look at the dependency of this Province on the Federal Government and their initiatives and we see such tremendous programs coming forward as the GST, Bill C-21, and Free Trade, and how it will impact on this particular Province, then we know that the difficulties facing this Government are certainly extreme.

A few weeks ago, we saw the arrogance and the lack of concern for people, who do not have the same opportunity as those in Ontario and/or Quebec, by a Committee Chairman appointed by Mr. Wilson, in the Federal Government, who had to be persuaded, or almost dragged and streeled, by his colleague, the

hon. Member for St. John's West, Mr. Crosbie, to Newfoundland to give the people in this Province a four-hour opportunity to express their concern with the new GST. However, the same Committee could find the time to spend ten days last winter in the sunny climate of New Zealand. And the hon. the Leader of the Opposition wants to talk about arrogance.

I do not think it is necessary today, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the UIC situation and Bill C-21. We know what took place in the Federal House yesterday at the final reading of that document that will impact and effect the people of this Province so greatly in the upcoming months and years. However, it is my understanding that there is a group that would make a presentation, and this Government is seeking now to show sensible logic to that group, to tell the Deputy Minister of Employment at the Federal level that a guaranteed income would be forthcoming for this Province because of the tremendous impact that has been thrust upon us by a new 9 per cent tax on a people that can ill-afford it, a reduction on the Avalon Peninsula in UIC, and Free Trade. The possibilities in it looks good now, but when you consider all the closures, the national and the multi-national closures in Canada, the Free Trade arrangement, people in this Province are really going to have an exceptionally difficult time facing their commitment to their families. And then you hear the rantings and ravings of the Leader of the Opposition, charging at Members in this Government to bring in new programs without the adequate dollars, without the adequate response that is needed, obviously, from the Federal Administration in retrospect to

what we have become known as, 'a have not Province'.

Moving on into a subject, Mr. Speaker, that obviously has been bandied about and almost bantered to death, the fishery, Newfoundland's stabilizing industry, we have seen what the previous Administration - and the Leader of the Opposition was the last Minister of Fisheries in that Provincial Administration. Well, time will tell what kind of job he did.

And his colleagues in Ottawa, when they sat about in 1987 putting the TAC down to what they felt was realistic, they gave the offshore industry in our Province a quota that obviously we found out two years later was way, way too high.

It was the previous Administration, Mr. Speaker, that concurred with the TAC set down by the Federal Tories. They concurred, and the big offshore companies went about into 2J+3KL and 3PS and cast their nets and two years later it is not the great reports that we had from Fisheries Products International and/or the great reports that we had from National Sea. Now, just two years later, Mr. Speaker, we are into a situation where we have a dismal fishery this year and, obviously, what will take place in the next two years we are almost afraid to discuss.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that this horrendous problem will not be alleviated by the hon. the Member for St. John's West scouting about Europe in a nice soft scenario, in a nice setting, trying to beguile France and Spain and all the European communities into staying clear of the Nose and Tail of the Grand Banks. That

will not do it, Mr. Speaker. We have been there before. We have asked a non-supportive European community to stay away from the Nose and Tail.

Mr. Crosbie is back from his hope mission and I would suggest to you, Sir, that he has accomplished absolutely nothing. We heard the other day about more air surveillance. Mr. Siddon announced a \$25 million program for surveillance off the coasts of Canada, and I might suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that that \$25 million would not buy one jet fighter. This is the importance that the Federal people put upon the fishery in this Province, the bread and butter issue that faces all of our people, both in Newfoundland and in Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, in my own District of St. John's South we are faced right now with the possibility of a plant closure that would directly affect 600 plant workers, not to mention the inshore fishermen associated in St. John's and surrounding communities. The hon. the Member for St. John's East Extern rose in his place in the Spring and talked about the horrendous actions of the offshore companies and what an impact they were having on the ability of the inshore industry to catch fish. And my learned friend from St. Mary's - the Capes, is very fortunate to have an offshore plant to handle his inshore catch, when in glut. And now the possibility of lack of honest scientific evaluation is falling right in our faces. I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that when the TAC comes down in February, from Ottawa, and it is dropped on the two multi-nationals, the two large companies that impact so much on

the economy of this Province, not only the 600 workers in the plant in St. John's South will be affected, but in surrounding communities 1,000 direct jobs, and probably somewhere in the vicinity of 2,400 jobs, will be affected because of the lack of courage of the previous administration in addressing the improprieties of their Federal friends in Ottawa.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not standing here trying to protect only the plant that sits in my district, in St. John's South. It is owned by National Sea, a Nova Scotia based company. I would want to show the same concern, Mr. Speaker, for the other deep-sea plant that that particular company operates in Burgeo. It is certainly not my intention, and I know it is not the intention of the workers at the plant in St. John's South, to even consider that Burgeo receive the same fate that is possibly facing the plant in St. John's South.

I think the understanding is that there may be a 30 per cent or 35 per cent reduction in the TAC. I think that the workers in both plants would be prepared to accept that percentage reduction, without closure. I would ask that all Members of this hon. House express their concern that this possibility may exist, and let it be known by all that no Nova Scotia company will come to the waters off Newfoundland and harvest fish to take to another province for processing.

It was not this Government, Mr. Speaker, that was part and parcel of issuing factory freezer trawler licences, it was the previous administration, and they did so without reluctance. They charged ahead, and we watched all the

grandiose numbers coming down, but today we are paying for them.

And what they have done in the last couple of days, Mr. Speaker, and it is really sad, the Federal Government are now putting a wedge between our offshore fishermen and our inshore fishermen. There are groups starting to form, and this is obviously what they want, and there will be in-fighting among the fishermen in this Province. And if that is the objective of the Mulroney Government, along with Mr. Siddon, and the lack of understanding on behalf of the Member for St. John's West to the problems in the fishery in this Province, then, obviously, we all know that is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, non-confidence: It has taken a great deal of courage on the part of the Premier and the hon. Ministers who represent this Government to pick up on the vacuum of seventeen years.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition stood in his place and criticized the amalgamation process, a courageous move on behalf of this Government, an extremely courageous move on behalf of the Minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

He alluded to some of the problems associated with the educational process in the Province. Again, I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, an extremely courageous Minister of Education has taken the task upon his shoulders that the previous administration did not have the courage to touch.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

And he wallowed through to the hon. the Minister of Social Services and said, 'How dare he? He gets what he deserves.' And he says it is not over yet. The fight is not over. The dirt has not all been thrown yet. I would suggest, if that is the platform that the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition are going to stand on looking for a non-confidence vote from this House, they may be subject to some of their own not standing. The National Enquirer is a clean document compared to what I have heard in the last three days.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address some of the things that are positive, that the Leader of the Opposition did not speak to, did not have the courage to speak to - in his good sense and his wisdom, he did not speak to it, because he knows it is very dangerous ground - the quiet way in which the Minister of Mines and Energy moves about in doing his job, in putting together the offshore and the tremendous hydro potential contained in Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

No chest-thumping, Mr. Speaker, no 'sold the shop' business, none of that, not negotiating in Hotel Newfoundland or Water Street, or not negotiating in Norway or Japan. The greatest fear Air Canada has today is that the previous administration will collectively turn in their Aeroplan points and they will need four aircraft to move them around.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

The noise without action.

You know, Mr. Speaker, Hibernia, as was announced by the Premier the other day, very quietly, without fanfare, is becoming a very realistic hope of this Province because of people like the Minister of Energy, like the Minister of Development, the good, conscientious, sound, solid Liberal way, Liberal Government, and believe me, Mr. Speaker, we will see it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

Irrespective of the natterings of our friend, the hon. the Member for Green Bay, who cringes, Mr. Speaker - you can watch him when we are talking about Hibernia. He cringes. He had ten years, and he waited every single day to stand in Cabot Tower and bawl out, 'It is in! It is in!'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

We saw one cup, and it put this Province in hysteria.

MR. HEWLETT:

(Inaudible).

MR. MURPHY:

There you go! If you squeak loud enough, he is sure to appear.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

And that is the man who ran around his district saying, do not worry, do not worry, we will do it! I wonder what he is running around saying now?



MR. HEWLETT:

We did it.

MR. MURPHY:

Yes, you did it all right! You did it!

Mr. Speaker, let me give him some information. If his Government, if his Administration had been wise enough, smart enough, educated enough, had enough logic to accept the Chretien offer, we might very well have oil in this Province today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

But, no, the former Minister, who was ready to sign a deal with Mr. Chretien, was scared off, politically scared off because they told Mr. Marshall, for heaven sake, do not sign anything with Mr. Chretien. Do not sign anything with Mr. Chretien, or we are politically wiped out. And what happened? Three and a half years later we saw, in Hotel Newfoundland, all arms raised, the Atlantic Accord. There is more oil in the base pan of my chain saw.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

Churchill Falls, the cleaniest, most economical source of power left in this world, a cry. The options in Ontario are what? Nuclear or gas generation? Every single day we turn on our televisions what do we see, Mr. Speaker? A tremendous amount of concern for the environment. And we both know that nuclear and gas and/or coal are not acceptable. And right in our very own Province we have the thrust of the megawatt

powers that can be developed and available to the rest of Canada, this great Canada that Mr. Mulroney wants to tie in, take a province and put it here and put the rest of us down there. No, Mr. Speaker, let me say to you, Sir, that logic will win out and logic will win out in the quiet, unassuming, negotiating way that this Government has approached the national problems associated with this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Tell us about the Upper Churchill.

MR. MURPHY:

Yes, I will tell you about the Upper Churchill. I will be glad to. I spent three years working up there.

The hon. the Premier of the day, at that particular time, was wise enough, even though he never had enough foresight, even though he could never dream in his wildest imagination that oil would go to \$36 a barrel. When he encouraged the dollars and cents from England to come into Newfoundland in very tough times and provide thousands and thousands of construction jobs, for twelve years, which meant education, roofs and food and clothing for the people of this Province, I was there, Sir. I do not know if you were.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

That is Liberalism, and you would understand that because you were there for a short time.

MR. HEWLETT:

Where are the Liberals today?

MR. MURPHY:

You were there for a short time.

MR. HEWLETT:  
They are here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:  
There are enough of them around. I would inform the hon. gentleman, there are enough of them around to put thirty-one members on this side of the House.

Taking Churchill Falls and the Lower Churchill, the Muskrat Falls, that tremendous area of development, and, again, in the quiet way that we are going about it - somebody said, I cannot remember his name, but I think he is on the other side 'Are there any fish in Meech Lake? Is the Meech Lake approach by the Government going to be detrimental to our signing a negotiation with Quebec Hydro, eventually ending up in the Province of Ontario?'

Well, I would suggest to this hon. House, Mr. Speaker, that Meech Lake has its own place, a very important place, and forever cast in stone and time, if we do not pay attention to Meech Lake, this Province will be doomed and destined to be a hand-out, coattail Province for the rest of history.

It is so important that the stand initiated by the Premier, by the hon. the Member for Pleasantville (Mr. Noel), and by thirty-one members of this caucus, a solid stand against Meech Lake, a solid stand, will only prove as the weeks go on, Mr. Speaker, and the people of this Province begin to understand the tremendous impact that signing the Meech Lake Accord would have on all our vital industries.

MS DUFF:  
Explain it to us.

MR. MURPHY:  
I certainly will explain it to you.

Meech Lake and its ramifications will impact and affect our fishery, our mining industry, our forest products, our hospital, our health, and our welfare situation throughout. Mr. Speaker, Members opposite are terrified. I suppose that is the best word to use. They are upset. They do not know how to come out of themselves and say to the people of Newfoundland, well, let us sit back and watch those people. They scream, they rant, they rave, and they take single people issues, try and make news and try and make thunder. That is our lack of confidence, that is why we have a motion of no confidence in this Government. And, the very Member who brought the motion of nonconfidence against this Government accused the Minister of Forestry of being stupid and backward. He told him that he was stupid and backward and that he moved away from chemicals into Bt and now he says, you got lucky. We know who got lucky. Mr. Speaker, to think about a non-confidence motion in respect of what this Government was given after sixteen years of emptiness, and the terrible, terrible time that all of these Ministers and all of the Government MHAs have had, trying to struggle with all this innuendo and negativity around, to put it on a sound and sincere level has taken this time, and obviously will take more time. But governing goes on, and in the middle of all that we have seen the moves that this Government has made. To stand in his place and even suggest a motion of non-confidence would indicate to

me that the hon. Members opposite have very little to discuss in this sitting. At least they have the opportunity this year, Mr. Speaker, to debate legislation amendments to Bills and Acts in this House. Last year the hon. Members who were here at that time, representing this party, did not have that opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I think already the people of Newfoundland are seeing the words, fairness and balance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

Mr. Speaker, fairness and balance in every aspect of Government. The dollars and cents that went through the Departments in the spring were priority and that in my mind, Mr. Speaker, is fairness and balance. The dollars that will be allocated through this Government next spring will be priority, and that is fairness and balance.

MR. DOYLE:

What about the recreation grants?

MR. MURPHY:

The hon. Member for Harbour Main knows only too well the difficulties from whence he came. As a Member of the iron workers and the building trades the last real opportunity that the construction trade unions in this Province had to work on, was a major Liberal project. And I would suggest to him also, Mr. Speaker, that the next opportunity they have will also be a Liberal project.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion may I say to the hon. the Leader of the Opposition that fifteen years in this House has been thrust upon the hon. Member for Placentia and myself, fifteen years - you are only here seven months.

MS VERGE:

(inaudible).

MR. MURPHY:

Hush up, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member from Humber East can only absorb so much in one day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

It is certainly not my intention, Mr. Speaker, to overtax her brain.

Mr. Speaker, there is no substance to nonconfidence. There is no substance to a motion of nonconfidence. Mr. Speaker, in the next months and years it will be proven, in decades it will be proven, that this Government is deserving of where it is. As the people of Newfoundland, under this Government, slowly but surely, quietly but effectively, reach an era of prosperity never seen before.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! It being 4:30 o'clock on Thursday we now move on to the late show.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

I adjourn the debate, Mr. Speaker.

Debate on the Adjournment  
[Late Show]

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday in the Question Period I had the opportunity to ask the Premier, through the House Leader, a question concerning the IES statement on low-level flying in Labrador. The statement that was released by the Federal Department of National Defense.

Mr. Speaker, I had a chance today to review the answer that the hon. Minister gave me. I think, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. Minister had even taken the opportunity to just bearly review the recommendations in the IES statement that he would determine from those recommendations that the statement is a little bias to say the least.

Mr. Speaker, I say to the hon. Colleague from Placentia that we are not in Question Period. And, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the hon. Minister that this report was carried out by the Federal Department of Defense. Naturally the same thing would apply with the evaluation that is carried out by the Department of Municipal Affairs on amalgamation. It is done within the Department. So I would think naturally this report is a bit biased. At the same time it did indicate two very grave concerns, Mr. Speaker. In fact, concerns that I expressed in 1979, Mr. Speaker, I wrote a letter at that time to the hon. Allan MacKinnon indicating my concerns about low-level flying in Labrador as it pertains to wildlife and to

the people affected. At that time and since then, I have indicated -

Mr. Speaker, will you tell the hon. Gentleman from Placentia to either shut up or get out.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to speak in this House and speak concerning a concern that is expressed in a part of this Province called Labrador. If the hon. gentleman from Placentia does not like that, then I suggest that he mind his own bloody business. I withdraw that, Mr. Speaker. I withdraw the word bloody, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Okay, the Chair has recognized that the hon. Member has withdrawn that remark.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would say Mr. Speaker to the hon. House Leader that there are concerns expressed, maybe not by the Member from Placentia, but by people in Labrador, that we have to make sure that the wildlife and the people are considered in every detail possible, before we go ahead with such a major investment. Granted, Mr. Speaker, it is going to be of great, immense economic value to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and I support it, I have come out publicly and I have supported NATO, and I still do support NATO. I have said that publicly in this House, Mr. Speaker, but I do not support NATO at the sacrifice of people and the residents of this Province, and I do not think my honourable Colleague from Naskaupi does the same thing, I think we are all on the same wave length. I would have thought that the Member for Placentia would have more common

sense than to interrupt a person who is trying to speak on behalf of the individuals in this Province. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear the hon. Member indicate that he is in favour of development of Labrador, development of the Province, but sensible development, and not development at any cost, and he is right when he says that generally is the position that we all take. It is a sensible position and hopefully when we go through the process we will be happy with the results. I hope so. I would like to correct an impression that was given by the hon. Member in what he said a little earlier. I would like to point out that the EIS was undertaken by a group of companies headed by Fenco Newfoundland Ltd., subsidiary of Lavalin Incorporated, which is a very large company, the DPA Group, S. Fudge and Associates, supported by specialized firms in Halifax - Nova Scotia, Edmonton - Alberta, Montreal - Quebec and some other firms elsewhere in Canada. It was not a study. I would not want people to get the impression that this was an internal study done by the Department of National Defence, it certainly was not. It is a very extensive study that was done, supposedly to look into all conditions surrounding the establishment of a NATO base at Goose Bay. So it was done by a very reputable group of companies headed up by Lavalin. They have now gone through the process, it

has been an extensive process, as a matter of fact it was started back in 1986 really, when it was recognized that these activities were being intensified in Goose Bay, the low level flying activities, regardless of whether NATO wanted to go in there or not, that is a point that the hon. Member should remember. The guide lines for the study for this EIS was prepared and made public in January of 1987, and I say to the hon. Member that, if at that time in January of 1987, if he and the then Government were not satisfied with the guide lines, that was the time to speak out about them. So I am assuming that the guide lines that were given were satisfactory to this group of companies or company, so it is not simply an internal DND study. In his question to me, in the House, the Member expressed the concern that there is a phrase in there about the effect on wildlife. The effect on wildlife is difficult to determine because too few studies have taken place. As I pointed out at the time that the Member was using a very short part of a sentence from the study, the complete text of that, the context of that statement is as follows, in the EIS study it says "that longer term effects of exposure to noise," they dealt with the short term effects. "Longer term effects of exposure to noise, especially the effects of noise from low level flying, and how animals may use the land and reproduce themselves, are difficult to determine because too few studies have examined this topic", and so the Member was perfectly right in what he said was there. However, it goes on to say that "because of that, the study recommends mitigations to be taken to avoid the areas where this problem may occur. The study

goes on to say that even though there have not been long range studies done, that it is safe to assume that the level of noise will have an effect on them, the higher the level of noise the greater the effect and so on, and because of that they are suggesting that NATO make special allowances for areas where animals may be and so on, so they would then avoid these areas.

I will simply repeat to the Member that we are together on his feeling about the NATO base for Goose Bay. We are in favour of proper development, but not at any cost. We want to look at the whole environmental impact study, and this is just simply a summary; there is a lot of documentation to go along with it somewhere, and we want to look at it and see if, in fact, there are no major deficiencies. We want to make sure that the individuals involved, particularly the Native population of Labrador, have a chance to express themselves to this group, that really is not an internal DND group. I mean, this group is handling the situation as if it were totally removed. As a matter of fact, DND has had things that they wanted to have done, and they have been refused. I know of several instances.

I hope all the Native groups in Labrador will have an equal opportunity to explain their position during the process. We will be keeping an eye on it, obviously. We will be making our own determination as to whether this is a substantial enough study, as to whether all the pros and cons are being brought out, and we will be trying to guarantee that the whole process is a fair process.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

On a point of order.

We have had some discussions, the Premier has a statement to present I understand, so at ten minutes to five we will revert to Ministerial Statements, we will call it, for want of a better term. In the interim, the second question that was scheduled, from the Member for St. John's East Extern to the Premier, will be eliminated, and we would like to move on to the third question, which was from the Member for St. John's East to the Minister of Health. When that one is over, we will then revert to Ministerial Statements, at ten to five, for your edification.

I am sure the Government House Leader would confirm that that is so.

MR. WARREN:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

Government House Leader, is that an agreement?

MR. BAKER:

That is perfectly okay.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a well-known debating tactic that when you cannot or you will not answer a question, the best thing to do is attack the questioner, on the grounds that offence is the best defence, and, I must say, the Minister's answer

was most certainly offensive.

The Minister's comments about my motives can only lead me to believe that he was not listening to the question. Because when I made posed question, I was extremely careful to phrase it to ask nothing that would breach confidentiality in relation to the young woman, nor would I do so. I was totally astonished by the sanctimonious display over confidentiality, in view of the media coverage that we had last summer. Because there is very little that the general public does not know about the circumstances of this unfortunate woman.

It is no wonder that there is a great deal of public interest and concern about Rochelle, and care about her circumstances. She came to us as a physically handicapped child, and later circumstances revealed that she was, in fact, an unfortunate young adult who was suffering from a very little understood mental illness. She is, nonetheless, totalling deserving of our help and compassion, and my question, I would like to assure the Minister, was motivated only by concern about the situation of a person who became the subject of public interest, and it was heightened by my own knowledge of the type of illness that this young woman's father has publicly indicated that she is suffering from.

Our Government very compassionately assumed the responsibility for Rochelle when she appeared to be abandoned, and this Government also has a responsibility to assure that her manner of leaving our Province is done in such a way that it does not place her at risk, and my

question simply related to the discharge of that responsibility. If the Minister had been willing to give a very simple assurance that this young woman did not simply walk away, as she has done before, if the Minister had indicated that she was, in fact, medically discharged and that her next of kin or other appropriate persons had been notified - that was all that was asked - or if the Minister had simply indicated to us that she has been transferred into the care of another jurisdiction, that would have been the end of it and there would not be any need for a debate. All that was required from the Minister in this instance was a simple, direct, honest and polite answer - no names, no dates, no places, no breach of confidence.

Instead of that, much to my total astonishment, the Minister reacted like a scald cat. And I am very suspicious of secrecy that goes beyond any rational need to protect confidentiality.

I am even more concerned than I was before about what the circumstances of Rochell's leaving this Province are.

Now, since I know the Minister is normally a polite, compassionate and rational man, I decided to place this on the agenda for debate because I want to give him another chance to enlighten the House on these simple direct questions in the public interest, and to do so in a manner that is consistent with his position in the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister for the

Department of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. Member so rightly pointed out, last spring this child did arrive in Newfoundland; she turned up on the steps of a church. Nobody in this Province knew who she was or where she had come from, therefore, it was necessary to use the media to have this persons picture flashed around the World in an attempt to identify her.

Now, the Province has been criticized for the extremes to which we went. The criticism was levelled by a group which met in this city just this summer, and accused this Province of being part of a media circus, where you took someone's illness and you splashed it across television screens - it was on the radio, it was on the Open Line Show. This was the criticism. In a sense, there is some truth to that. Maybe we did make a media circus, but probably we can justify it. We can justify some of it, because it was essential that we find out who this person was. We actually found out.

At one stage it was considered that we would make this child, as we thought she was, a ward of the Province so that we could ensure that her best interests were looked after. When her identity finally was established, it was discovered that she was a nineteen year old adult and that she had a mental illness.

Now, the hon. Member refers to a particular mental illness which, I should advise her, is not her mental illness. She does indeed have a mental illness, but not the one the hon. Member talks about. But that is not really a matter

for us to publicize. We should not go on hearsay, but she does have a mental illness.

She was admitted to the Waterford Hospital, which is administered by a Board, and the Board is controlled or overseen by the Department of Health. Now once she was placed in that institution and came under the Department of Health - we knew who she was - we did not see any need in splashing the personal affairs of that woman on the media any more. We did not think that was necessary. If the hon. Member were in the Waterford, it would not be fair, it would not be right for us to splash it across the Nation every time there was some change in her condition. We would not think that was right.

The hon. Member talks about the possibility that her best interests might not be looked out for. Now that is a legitimate valid question. The Government was quite aware of that. Instead of directly looking out for her best interest we appointed a lawyer, a lawyer in this City was appointed, and paid for by the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, to ensure that there would be no interference, but that her best interest would be looked after. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you it was looked after. Just as it is the duty of the Department of Health to look after our own citizens, we likewise looked after the best interest of this woman, just as if she had been a resident of Newfoundland and Labrador. She stayed in the establishment. A CBC reporter happened to be in Halifax a few days ago and saw this person changing flights. That CBC reporter phoned back to her station, I was listening to the radio news in the morning, and she



said that she had seen Ms Scholl in Halifax. So I guess there is no point in trying to deny that she has left the Province, indeed she has left the Province.

Now I have been getting calls from the media in Newfoundland and Labrador. I have been getting calls from the National media asking for information on this woman. I understand this morning it was the topic of a local Open Line Show, it was discussed on the Open Line Show that this woman had left the Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, there is one thing I want to avoid this time, I do not want to make this into another media circus.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:  
If it was done before maybe there was some justification for it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:  
But I cannot see any justification for making it another media circus. Not only, Mr. Speaker, would it be improper, not only would it be improper for me to discuss the specifics of this person, it would even be illegal. It would be against the law. It would be against the law for me to discuss this.

Now generally, when I have explained this to the people of the media who come to me individually for an interview, I said look, are you going to serve the best interest of this woman by making another media circus? And the media understands that, Mr. Speaker.

Now if the hon. Member for St. John's East has a genuine concern for Ms Scholl, and I would assume she has. I will take her at her word. I would refer her to Ms Scholl's lawyer, Mary Philpott has been appointed, paid for by the people of this Province, and I can assure the hon. Member that Ms Philpott ensured that the best interests of this woman were indeed looked after. And I am proud to say that she was here, she was treated perfectly, just as any other person in our Province would be treated. And if there is any doubt that she was mistreated, then I direct those questions and those concerns to Ms Scholl's lawyer, Mrs. Mary Philpott.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
The Chair is under the assumption that the Late Show is now over and that we are now going into Ministerial Statements, but everything else remains the same and the House adjourns at 5:00 under the same procedure.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I agreed earlier today that once the Chief Justice had indicated his general approval of the terms of reference, and the Lieutenant-Government had signed the Order, I would explain to the House the basis for the Government's decision and table the Order in Council. I have just now received the Order in Council and an indication that His Honour has approved the Minutes.

The matter that we are dealing with is an allegation. It does not allege if there is any improper use of funds or any improper thing. There is no such allegation of that. The allegation that Mr. Petten of Eastern Shipbuilding made, who, by the way, I believe is related to the Minister, is he not?

MR. EFFORD:

Yes, my brother-in-laws brother.

PREMIER WELLS:

His brother-in-laws brother, okay. I had thought there was some relationship.

The allegations that the gentleman made were that he has been injured and his company has been injured. His company is a shipbuilding company and he claimed that the Minister unduly interfered and made claims and interfered with the Fisheries Loan Board, and that they now treat his company differently, I believe was the content of his letter to me, and that as a result his company has been unfairly treated because the Minister had been interfering in a matter that involved the Minister's brother's boat, and the loan to the Loan Board. There was no allegation of improper payment or anything of that nature, as far as the Minister was concerned or the Minister's brother, or anything of that nature. So it is not the kind of circumstance that justifies a public inquiry like the Hughes Inquiry. The Government has to be satisfied and the House has to be satisfied that the Ministers of the Crown are not acting improperly in the discharge of their duties as Ministers. So I could take the responsibility on myself to make all the enquiries and come and report to this House and say, I have enquired and I

have decided there is no impropriety. I do not want there to be a situation where there is any allegation that I am using anything less than totally objective judgement in coming to that conclusion, so the appropriate thing is to get somebody independent to do that. The best and the most independent kind of individual who would understand these kind of matters and could render advice to the House and to the Government on the matter, is obviously a Justice of the Supreme Court. So, taking advantage of the provision in Section 56 of the Federal Judges Act that empowers judges, or authorizes judges of the court to act when they are authorized, either by an Act of the Legislature or by an Order in Council, we decided that this was the most appropriate course to follow and we issued an Order in Council which I will table now, to authorize the judge named by the Chief Justice to conduct this investigation. I telephoned Chief Justice Goodridge yesterday, told him what the nature of the matter was and asked him if he would name a judge to conduct this investigation. He telephoned back sometime late yesterday and advised that he had named Mr. Justice John Mahoney of the Court of Appeal. Members will remember that Mr. Justice Mahoney was named to conduct another enquiry some years ago into the Public Works Department. I was not in the House at the time but I seem to recall that.

So, the Order in Council specifically provides that Mr. Justice Mahoney is hereby empowered to interview all persons having knowledge of activities alleged to have been taken by the hon. John Efford, Minister of

Social Services, in relation to claims of his brother, Harold Efford, arising from the construction of the motor vessel Shelby Ann. Now, there is no limitation on that. Whatever the claims that have been made by Mr. Petten in relation to the Minister's actions or anything that he said or did, is open to enquiry by the Judge. He is specifically directed to determine whether any action taken by the Minister constitutes an impropriety in relation to his role as a Minister of the Crown. Now, he is to make that determination - whether or not it constitutes an impropriety. And we specifically provided further, that all Ministers, officials of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and its agencies, provide Mr. Justice Mahoney with their complete and unreserved cooperation in all respects of the investigation.

Secondly, that Mr. Justice Mahoney be empowered to make such recommendations as he deems fit, including whether a full public enquiry is warranted. Now, if Mr. Mahoney looks at it and he says: "This is circumstances that justifies a full public enquiry", he can recommend it. I commit to the House today that the Government will order it and will provide for it, if it is recommended. And, Mr. Justice Mahoney is requested to present his report to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council at the earliest possible opportunity, consistent with a full and fair investigation of the matter.

I would hope that Mr. Justice Mahoney can produce his report very quickly within, I do not want to limit him, but I would expect that he should be able to do it

within a couple of weeks or so, and as soon as the report is received I will table the report in the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, first of all let me thank the Premier for raising the matter this evening as he indicated earlier today that he would do.

Secondly, let me say that from my experience I find that this is a very unusual procedure. Enquiries of this nature, that I have had an opportunity to observe in this public forum in the time that I have been here, with one exception, are always conducted under the authority of The Public Enquiries Act. There was one exception where a Judge of the Supreme Court was asked to specifically investigate the files related to a certain police report that had been leaked, related to a certain incident at Elizabeth Towers. That was a specific request to review those files and make a judgement and make a report to the Government of the day.

So, first of all we find the use of Section 56 of The Federal Judge's Act unusual. I am not saying that there is anything wrong with it, but we find it unusual in this kind of political situation.

Secondly, it appears that witnesses who will be called before Mr. Justice Mahoney do not have to give sworn testimony under this particular provision. There are a number of questions, in other words, that have come to our attention since we have been given

the Order in Council, that we will obviously have to seek further clarification on. The people of the Province deserve to know the evidence. The people affected deserve to have an opportunity to be heard. We have full confidence that Mr. Justice Mahoney will do just that, and we certainly await his report and we hope that the Premier will ensure that his report is tabled in this House.

I might add as well, Mr. Speaker, that even though Mr. Justice Mahoney is empowered to determine whether or not the matter warrants a full public enquiry - the Government is not necessarily bound to accept that recommendation. I hear what the Premier says and I understand that if that is recommended, the Government would move to honor it.

So where we have every confidence in Mr. Justice Mahoney to do the job carried out or required of him here, we just have some concerns initially, that this seems to be a rather unique procedure. One not normally used in this kind of political situation in other inquiries in this Province, and we may have more to say to that on another date, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House is now adjourned until Monday November 6 at 2:00 p.m.

Index

Answers to Questions

tabled

November 2, 1989

*Tabled by Hon. Minister  
of Health Nov. 2/89  
(Answer to Question)*

MR. SPEAKER:

I WISH TO ADVISE THE HOUSE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON THE DRUG ERYTHROPOIETIN, ALSO KNOWN AS EPO. THE MATTER WAS RAISED RECENTLY BY THE HONOURABLE MEMBER FOR ST. JOHN'S EAST.

EPO IS CURRENTLY BEING TESTED IN CANADA FOR USE IN PATIENTS WITH ANEMIA AS A RESULT OF CHRONIC KIDNEY FAILURE. THIS DRUG IS STILL IN THE EXPERIMENTAL STAGE OF INVESTIGATION IN CANADA AND HAS NOT BEEN LICENSED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR GENERAL USE. THE SEVEN INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE CURRENTLY RECEIVING THIS THERAPY IN NEWFOUNDLAND HAVE BEEN PARTICIPATING IN A CLINICAL TRIAL WHICH WAS DESIGNED TO ASSESS THE VALUE OF THIS DRUG. THIS CLINICAL TRIAL IS A PART OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS OF THE HEALTH PROTECTION BRANCH OF HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA. IT IS REQUIRED BEFORE A DRUG IS LICENSED FOR USE IN THIS COUNTRY. THIS IS STANDARD PROCEDURE APPLIED TO ALL NEW DRUGS.

WHILE THEY WERE PARTICIPANTS IN THE CLINICAL TRIAL THE SEVEN INDIVIDUALS IN NEWFOUNDLAND RECEIVED THE DRUG FREE OF CHARGE FROM THE DRUG MANUFACTURER. THESE INDIVIDUALS WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THE DRUG UNTIL NEXT WEEK WHEN THE CLINICAL TRIAL IS COMPLETED AT WHICH TIME THEY WILL NO LONGER HAVE ACCESS TO IT. HOWEVER, UNDER THE EMERGENCY

RELEASE REGULATIONS OF THE HEALTH PROTECTION BRANCH, IT IS POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN THIS DRUG ON AN INDIVIDUAL CASE BASIS. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE DRUG CAN CONTINUE TO BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR THESE INDIVIDUALS UNDER THIS PROVISION BUT THE MANUFACTURERS WILL NOT PROVIDE IT FREE OF CHARGE.

I AM PLEASED TO INFORM THE HOUSE, MR. SPEAKER, THAT ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING MADE WITH THE GENERAL HOSPITAL TO COVER THE COST OF EPO FOR THESE SEVEN INDIVIDUALS ON AN INTERIM BASIS WHILE WE AWAIT THE OUTCOME OF THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS OF HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA. I UNDERSTAND THAT A DECISION ON THIS MATTER BY THE HEALTH PROTECTION BRANCH WILL NOT BE FORTHCOMING AT LEAST UNTIL THE END OF DECEMBER AND POSSIBLY NOT UNTIL WELL INTO THE NEW YEAR. THE COST OF PROVIDING THIS DRUG IS APPROXIMATELY \$600 PER PERSON PER MONTH.

MR. SPEAKER, THE ISSUE OF THE PROVISION OF EPO LEADS US INTO THE BROADER ISSUE OF THE PROVISION OF HIGH COST DRUGS FOR ANY PATIENT IN OUR PROVINCE. THERE ARE NOW MORE, VERY EXPENSIVE DRUGS BECOMING AVAILABLE TO TREAT A VARIETY OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS. WHEN I REFER TO HIGH COST DRUGS, I AM REFERRING TO DRUGS THAT ARE VERY EXPENSIVE - THOSE THAT COST

THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS PER YEAR - AND WHICH ARE NORMALLY PRESCRIBED FOR VERY SPECIFIC MEDICAL CONDITIONS, USUALLY BY A LIMITED NUMBER OF PHYSICIANS WHO TREAT THOSE PARTICULAR CONDITIONS IN A HOSPITAL SETTING.

MY DEPARTMENT, AND MOST HEALTH MINISTRIES IN CANADA, ARE NOW TRYING TO DETERMINE THE MOST APPROPRIATE WAY TO DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE.

IT IS MY INTENTION THAT OUR REVIEW OF THIS ISSUE WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT, DRUG INSURANCE PLANS AND INDIVIDUAL PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.