



Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

FORTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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ELECTION OF SPEAKER

HANSARD

*Speaker: Honourable Perry Trimper, MHA*

Tuesday

August 8, 2017

Members met in the Assembly Chamber on the afternoon of August 8, 2017 for the Election of a Speaker.

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:** All rise.

Madam Clerk, His Honour, the Administrator, has arrived.

**CLERK (Barnes):** Admit His Honour, the Administrator.

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:** It is the wish of His Honour, the Administrator, that all present be seated.

**CLERK:** Good afternoon.

Members of the House of Assembly, on July 31, 2017, I received notice of resignation as Speaker of this Assembly from the Honourable Tom Osborne, Member for the District of Waterford Valley. In accordance with the Standing Orders, I advised Members of the House of Assembly of the vacancy in the Office of the Speaker.

I have a Proclamation from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

TO: The Honourable J. Derek Green  
Chief Justice of Newfoundland and Labrador,  
Court of Appeal.

GREETING;

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS by a letter of resignation addressed to the Clerk of the House of Assembly, the Honourable Tom Osborne, vacated the position of Speaker of the House of Assembly on July 31, 2017;

AND WHEREAS it is expedient to call together the Forty-Eighth General Assembly on the said day for the Members of the House of Assembly to proceed to their choice of a Speaker;

NOW THEREFORE I, the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, do authorize and direct you, the said Honourable J. Derek Green, to assemble for the dispatch of business on Tuesday, the 8th day of August, 2017 at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and that it is

my pleasure that they should choose some person to be their Speaker and to present such person on that day for my approbation.

His Honour the Administrator.

**HIS HONOUR THE ADMINISTRATOR (Chief Justice J. Derek Green):** Members of the House of Assembly, I have it in command of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor to acquaint you that His Honour, having been informed of the vacancy in the Office of the Speaker of this Assembly and it being necessary that a Speaker of this Assembly be chosen, it is His Honour's will that you, the Members of the House of Assembly, do proceed to the election of a Speaker and that you present that person here today for my approval.

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:** All rise.

(His Honour the Administrator leaves the Chamber.)

**CLERK:** Please be seated.

At the close of nominations for the Office of the Speaker at 4:30 p.m., Monday, August 7, 2017, two candidates put their names forward. The candidates, in alphabetical order, are Ms. Pam Parsons, Mr. Perry Trimper.

Members of the House of Assembly, pursuant to the Lieutenant Governor's direction and the Standing Orders of this Assembly, it is my duty to call upon you to elect a Member to preside over your deliberations as Speaker.

Would the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Pages please place the voting booths and the ballot box in position? Would the Pages please distribute the list of candidates to all Members' desks and place one in each voting booth?

Before beginning the election, I will briefly outline the process to be followed as set out in the Standing Orders of this House. For each round of balloting, Members are asked to proceed starting from the back or third row of desks on their respective sides of the House and file past the Speaker's Chair to the head of the Clerk's Table. At the Table, each Member will be given a ballot and asked to initial a list to verify that they have received it.

In the voting booth, please print or write legibly the surname of the candidate you support on the ballot paper, place it in the ballot box at the end of the Clerk's Table and return to your place. You can only vote for one candidate, so please do not list or rank the candidates. Write the surname of your choice for Speaker on the ballot.

When all Members wishing to vote have done so, the House will recess while the Clerks withdraw to count the vote. A majority of the votes cast is required to elect the Speaker. If candidates receive the same number of votes, there will be another ballot.

Immediately before the start of the second or any subsequent ballot, a Member who wishes to withdraw will be given an opportunity to do so. When the count of each ballot is completed, a five-minute bell will ring to call the Members to the Chamber. In preparation for the vote, the Sergeant-at-Arms will inspect and lock the ballot box.

The list of candidates is on each Member's desk and in each of the two voting booths. We will now proceed with the beginning of the voting procedure. I now ask those Members who wish to cast ballots to proceed starting from the back row from your respective sides of the House to the Clerk's Table, then proceed to the voting booth and then deposit your ballot in the ballot box.

If there are any Members who have not voted and wish to do so, please vote now.

All Members having voted, the House will recess to the call of the bells while the Clerks at the Table count the ballots. The bells will ring for five minutes to recall Members to the Chamber when the results of the first ballot are ready to be announced.

Thank you very much.

### Recess

**CLERK:** Accordingly, further to suborder 4(11) of the Standing Orders, I declare Mr. Perry Trimper, Member for the District of Lake Melville, elected as Speaker for the remainder of the Forty-Eighth General Assembly.

(Applause.)

(The hon. the Premier and the hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition lead Mr. Trimper to the Speaker's Chair.)

**MR. SPEAKER (Trimper):** Well, this is quite a view.

I have some remarks. First of all, thank you very much, colleagues. I'm not sure I saw this coming, but I'm very glad to be here. I thank you all for your support.

I find myself just marveling somehow: How did I end up in this spot right now?

I showed up in this great province 1987; 30 years ago. Two guys named Dave Lemon and Steve Fudge gave me a three-month job opportunity in Labrador. I always used to tease those guys because they never talked about an extension; I ended up staying and embracing this province. It's been so good to me and I couldn't be more honoured and humbled to be here with you now.

I must say a very sincere thank you to every Member of this House. You've all become colleagues of mine, whether I'm on the government side, where I've been happy to sit, but also getting to know the Opposition. It's been truly rewarding. I actually enjoy every minute in this House. Some people say it can pull on you, it can wear on you. I have embraced it and I've learned a lot here.

It's interesting, as I did some history and prepared for what might happen to me today, I went back to the 14th century, as one needs to do to understand the role of the Speaker. In those days, the Speaker was very much a messenger, a messenger between the news and the monarch, and if that news wasn't so good, it could often mean the end of that Speaker's career, both figuratively and physically. So hence the reason why you might want to try to resist, but with the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier, I didn't have much hope there. I must say, it's fun to see these traditions. I take them very seriously and I will certainly take this job very seriously.

I'd also like to acknowledge and commend the Member for Harbour Grace – Port de Grave for putting her name forward for consideration. I understand her interest and I wish her well in future endeavours and opportunities to serve the people of this province.

Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** As I alluded to, and as I embarked on this political career just a few short years ago, I stated that my objective was to always do what I could do to make a difference, to try to pay it back, as it were, a debt of gratitude that I owe Newfoundland and Labrador. So to find myself in the Speaker's Chair is very much an esteemed position and I will be dedicated to facilitating productive debate and governance to address the important matters in Newfoundland and Labrador.

These last 20 months have been a great adventure. Having had almost a full career in the private sector, it's allowed me to learn first-hand the commitment required by each Member of the House, to respond to the needs of their constituents and other responsibilities entrusted to us by the people of the province.

I would first of all like to thank my wife, Caroline Hong, who's up in Labrador, I believe, watching via Internet – hopefully it's still working – for her steady guidance and support. This political pursuit has been our team effort.

I also need to express appreciation for all the support from my parents, June and Wendell Trimper, political veterans; they've been at this for all of their lives. I'm sure they're watching and, yeah, I thank them very much. Also my wife's parents – and many people from St. John's will know them – Lan and Yan Quan William Hong of Hong's Takeout fame for their work ethic and dedication have been a great support to myself as well.

I've also got a great team around me in this political arena. I've got a constituency assistant, Bonnie Learning, who's off taking a very much-needed vacation right now and my executive assistant, Ian Murphy, who's up in the stands. For all those of you who have worked with Ian

and with Bonnie, you know I'm surrounded by very good people who also enjoy problem solving. Together, our team looks forward to taking on this new role.

Over these last 20 months I've had the honour to serve as the minister responsible for some eight departments, offices and boards of government. I do thank the Premier for entrusting me with this opportunity. I want to express my gratitude for also having worked with so many dedicated and experienced staff within the civil service. Your job is not easy but you do your work well. I continue to be impressed by the calibre of your talent.

I also understand, I'm not sure, but I may be the first Speaker who was also an MHA representing a district in Labrador. I see this as a very proud achievement and one that I want to share with the district association for Lake Melville. I will continue to be appreciative of their support. I want to reassure all constituents and the communities of Sheshatshiu, North West River, Churchill Falls, Happy Valley-Goose Bay and especially Mud Lake, which has had such a difficult year, that they will remain a priority for me.

I also would like to take the minute, if I could while I'm on this stage, to a special acknowledgement for a constituent who just bicycled across Canada raising money for the Children's Wish Foundation. He did this in an amazing a little over 55-56 days. Matthew Pike, you are to be congratulated for all you've done. I'd like to have a little round of applause if I could.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The role of Speaker is to preside over the proceedings of the House of Assembly. The key characteristics are authority and impartiality. The Speaker is to serve all Members equally, regardless of party affiliation.

Le président de la Chambre d'assemblée a pour rôle principal de conduire les délibérations. Les principales caractéristiques des fonctions du président de la Chambre d'assemblée sont l'autorité et l'impartialité. Le Président doit traiter tous des députés de manière égale peu importe le parti auquel ils appartiennent.

As I step into this new role, I would like to invite all hon. Members to show their appreciation to the former Speaker, the now hon. Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board and the MHA for Waterford Valley, for the example he has set and the bar of excellence that I will attempt to attain.

Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** To all those affiliated with the operation of the House of Assembly, may I say that I look forward to working with you and the important traditions of this office. As with my predecessor, my door will be open to all over the remainder of this Forty-Eighth General Assembly.

This is the people's House. I look forward to doing what I can to support the people of our province. Thank you, tshinashkumitin, nakummek, merci beaucoup, shokran.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You had mentioned that you liked spending your time in this House of Assembly and I can assure you now you have the opportunity to spend every single sitting minute in this House of Assembly, so congratulations.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**PREMIER BALL:** I also want to recognize the Member for Harbour Grace – Port de Grave for allowing and showing us democracy in action today, and I appreciate you putting your name forward.

It's my privilege now to move, and this will be seconded by the Leader of the Official Opposition, that the Member for the District of Baie Verte – Green Bay be appointed Deputy

Speaker for the remainder of the Forty-Eighth General Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The motion is that the Member for Baie Verte – Green Bay be nominated as the Deputy Speaker.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

The hon. the Premier.

**PREMIER BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, again seconded by the Leader of the Official Opposition, that the Member for the District of St. George's – Humber be appointed Deputy Chair of Committees for the remainder of the Forty-Eighth General Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The motion is that the Member for St. George's – Humber be nominated as the Deputy Chair of Committees.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Against?

Motion carried.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:** Mr. Speaker, His Honour, the Administrator, has arrived.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Admit His Honour, the Administrator.

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:** It is the wish of His Honour, the Administrator, that all present be seated.

**PREMIER BALL:** May it please Your Honour, the House of Assembly, agreeable to Your Honour's command, have proceeded for the choice of Speaker and have elected Mr. Perry Trimper, the Member for the District of Lake

Melville, to that office and by their direction I present him for the approbation for Your Honour.

**HIS HONOUR THE ADMINISTRATOR (Chief Justice J. Derek Green):** On behalf of Her Majesty, I assure you of my sense of your efficiency and I do most fully approve and confirm you as Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you.

Your Honour, having approved the choice of this House in constituting me as their Speaker, it now becomes my duty in the name of the representatives of Her Majesty's loyal subjects to ask that I, as Speaker, may have full access to Your Honour's presence at all reasonable times.

**HIS HONOUR THE ADMINISTRATOR:** Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, that your words and actions will constantly receive from him the most favorable construction.

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:** All rise.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Please be seated.

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Point of order.

**MR. SPEAKER:** A point of order has been called.

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Mr. Speaker, under Standing Order 1: "(1) The proceedings in the House of Assembly and in all committees of the House shall be conducted in accordance with the following Standing Orders and with the sessional and other orders of the House.

"(2) In all cases not provided for in these Standing Orders or by sessional or other orders of the House, the Speaker shall be guided by the following in the order in which they are stated: (a) the usages, customs and precedents of this House; (b) the Standing Orders and sessional orders and forms and usages, customs and precedents of the House of Commons of Canada and those of any province or territory in Canada; and (c) in all cases not provided for above, the usages, customs and precedents of the House of Commons at Westminster in the United Kingdom."

We all remember the precedent a few weeks ago when, in the House by unanimous consent by all Members, the normal business day was interrupted from the normal flow of proceedings defined by the Order Paper as we celebrated the Grey Cup brought to the floor of the House for photos and to allow a Minister of the Crown to speak and a tribute to the Canadian Football League.

We granted leave for that, just as we are seeking leave to revert to the published Order Paper today for Question Period. We also know what the House of Commons *Compendium of Procedure* states: "The House devises its own rules, develops its own practices, and is master of its own proceedings."

It further states: "At times, the House may choose to depart from the rules it has made for itself by obtaining the consent of all Members present in the Chamber. Such a suspension of the rules or usual practices is done by what is termed 'unanimous consent.' When unanimous consent is sought, the Chair takes care to determine that no voice is raised in opposition; if there is one single dissenting voice, there can be no unanimity. Whenever the House proceeds by unanimous consent, the fact is noted in the official record."

Mr. Speaker, we're here in the House today at the recall for the election of a new Speaker. Members from across the province in 40 Districts had to return to the people's House. Certainly, there is expense related to that.

There are many issues in the province that I'm sure the government wants to speak to. We'd certainly, as an Opposition, like to speak to them and ask questions on issues that are arising. Therefore, I'm asking for unanimous consent of this House to proceed to the Order Paper and proceed to Question Period for today so the people's House can truly reflect the issues that are outstanding today that the public would like to hear about.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I can speak on behalf of this side of the House and say: Bring on Question Period.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Before we proceed, I'd like to ask and seek consent from the Third Party and from the Independent Member. Do I have consent?

**MS. MICHAEL:** Yes.

**MR. LANE:** Absolutely.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Okay, with that, ladies and gentlemen, Oral Questions.

### Oral Questions

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I assure you we're well prepared for Question Period today and hoped that the government would take that position.

Mr. Speaker, since the resignation of a senior Liberal Cabinet minister, I ask the Premier: Has he instructed the new Finance Minister to take a different approach to managing the provincial finances?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today we're setting all kinds of historic records in this House of Assembly. By the sounds of things, we have our first Speaker from a district in Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER BALL:** Today, we stand here and answer questions for the first time when the Members opposite have refused to do this in this specific example that we're talking about today, forever.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER BALL:** Mr. Speaker, collective bargaining within our province – we've already said that we will enter into meaningful, productive collective bargaining sessions with our organized members and public service. That work continues right now. We will see the work continue and the lead person on that will be the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, we're always quite happy to ask questions and we're doing so today. I remind the Premier that it was on May 2, 2016 that the Premier stood on his feet in this House and said that using McInnes Cooper, bringing their advice to the table, is important for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

I ask the government today: Who made the decision to sever ties with McInnes Cooper?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. OSBORNE:** I thank the Member for his question. I made the decision, but before I even had an opportunity to voice that decision, McInnes Cooper had themselves withdrawn services.

This is a new day; we're starting with a fresh slate, a clean slate. I intend to deal and to negotiate with our public sector unions in good faith and I welcome the meetings that are coming this week and next.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, it cost taxpayers more than \$250,000 for the services from McInnes Cooper which the

new Finance Minister has stated now is unnecessary.

I ask the new Minister of Finance: Was it a mistake to hire McInnes Cooper in the first place? What value did they bring now that you've severed ties with them?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

**MR. OSBORNE:** I'm looking forward to meeting with McInnes Cooper to see what they can provide to me in terms of the work they've done. I'm not prepared to say that it was a mistake. Anything that can lead to productive discussions with the unions is valuable.

The unions had voiced concern about the use of McInnes Cooper. I heard those concerns. McInnes Cooper had withdrawn their service, but any advice that McInnes Cooper can provide to me or any advice that the Member opposite – you're welcome to my office any time at all, my door is open. If you can provide advice to me on how to move forward and have productive meetings with the unions, I welcome that as well.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'll ask the minister to explain exactly what benefit taxpayers, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, gained from spending \$250,000 on McInnes Cooper. What was gained by that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

**MR. OSBORNE:** I just said that I've yet to meet with McInnes Cooper. I will be meeting with McInnes Cooper and they, I'm sure, will brief me on the work they've done. I'm sure there's probably a day or maybe two days of meetings with McInnes Cooper to get brought up to speed with what they've put forward. I look forward to that meeting.

Until that meeting I can't comment on what McInnes Cooper has provided. But without a question, without a doubt, I believe it was with good intent that McInnes Cooper was hired to try and move along these meetings.

I'm very happy with the support we have within the Treasury Board and the resources within government and that's how we're going to proceed.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Well I'm glad to hear that, Mr. Speaker, because previously it was said by the government opposite that they never had what was needed within the public service to carry out negotiations. So I'm glad to see that change in view.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has been in the chair for almost two years. He oversees all the operations of government.

I respect the fact that the minister is new so I'll ask the Premier: What benefit do Newfoundlanders and Labradorians get from McInnes Cooper?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**PREMIER BALL:** Mr. Speaker, it never fails to amaze me how the Leader of the Opposition just deliberately stays away from facts, deliberately misleading the people in our province. It's been said many, many times.

When the negotiations started, Mr. Speaker, and the decision was made to bring in the strategic advice from McInnes Cooper, at that time there was a limited number of people. The resources the previous administration had in place far outnumbered the resources that were available to start this round of collective bargaining.

The collective bargaining now has progressed along. Now, the minister responsible for Finance and Treasury Board is leading this and he will lead this with the team of people that he wants to



put around him. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to stick to the facts. Stop misleading the people of this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier is amazed over there; he says he's amazed. He should have a look around the province because the people of Newfoundland and Labrador are amazed with the lack of leadership in him and his government, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, oil prices are down below forecast and the exchange rate isn't helping. The jobless rate is rising; the Bank of Canada rate hike won't likely do anything to benefit Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Can the new Finance Minister give an updated projection of the deficit for the current fiscal year and what, if anything, he's planning to do to make the adjustments?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**PREMIER BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, the Leader of the Opposition is deliberately excluding some of the big issues that are facing this province. Why is it that the Leader of the Opposition just leaves out the impact of Muskrat Falls on this province? He deliberately left it out, deliberately refused to tell the people of this province what the impact was, hid information from the people of this province in 2015. They needed to know.

Why did he hide the financial situation of this province, Mr. Speaker? The Leader of the Opposition deliberately, once again, misleading the people of the province, hiding information that he had.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has done a very good job in putting the financial foundation in place in this province. So if he wants to talk

about leadership, why doesn't he let the people of this province know right now: Is he running his leadership campaign where he is now? If he is, he should resign where he is and let (inaudible).

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's nice to know that the Premier is very interested in what's happening with the leadership of our party, and many people are throughout the province. I'm glad he's interested to know that, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to point out very simply, here we are in Question Period, they stand here and they beat their chest, oh, bring on the questions. But they won't bring on the answers, Mr. Speaker, and we just saw it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. P. DAVIS:** We just saw it again, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier wants to talk about Muskrat Falls. I'll be glad to talk about Muskrat Falls.

I ask the Premier: Now that the former Nalcor chair is no longer in his Cabinet, will the Premier now to commit to undertaking a forensic audit immediately on Muskrat Falls?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**PREMIER BALL:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, the Leader of the Opposition deliberately doesn't want to talk about the increase in electricity rates that will be impacted by the Muskrat Falls Project, Mr. Speaker. Now

he's questioning about the forensic audit or an inquiry into Muskrat Falls.

Well, two things I want to mention, Mr. Speaker. We've been on record – we have been on record saying we're going to do this. This needs to be done. That commitment has been clear.

What is not clear is why did the Leader of the Opposition, when this project was being sanctioned, not do his own audit and not let the people of this province have their say into this project and the impact that it would have on the future of Newfoundland and Labrador? He deliberately left people out in 2012 as part of the previous administration, Mr. Speaker. Right now, all of this is gamesmanship looking for political opportunism.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, the Premier rises to his feet and refuses to answer the question that was asked.

Mr. Speaker, it's not the first time the Premier has refused to provide information, especially about Muskrat Falls. As a matter of fact, for months and months and months they withheld oversight reports and still to this day refuse to release them. They also are refusing to call a forensic audit.

I ask the Premier: The reason and refusal to release the Oversight Committee reports, is it the same reason you're refusing to do the audit right now?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**PREMIER BALL:** Here we go again, Mr. Speaker, misleading the people of the province, the Leader of the Opposition deliberately misleading the people of the province. I answered his question, Mr. Speaker, but I will answer it again, just in case.

The forensic audit or an inquiry that's required to get to the bottom of the decision that they

made and the decision that they refused to talk about, a decision that's having a profound impact on rates in this province, a decision that's having a profound impact on the financial situation of this province, a forensic audit or maybe an advanced inquiry, something to get to the bottom so the people in this province will have the answers that they deserve, the answers to the questions that they kept from the people of our province for nearly the whole time that this project was sanctioned in 2012 and beyond, we will get those questions answered.

So the answer to the forensic audit is, yes – or the inquiry – it will be done.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm not sure what that was. He's working hard not to answer questions today, I can assure you. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to try the Minister of Natural Resources.

I'm going to ask the Minister of Natural Resources: When did she learn of and receive a copy of 2013 SNC-Lavalin report for which they falsely claim was given to the former administration.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**MS. COADY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the most important question.

I'm going to say this: Mr. Speaker, if they did not receive a copy of the SNC-Lavalin report dated 2013 – which would have given them the information to shut down that project – that is neglect.

They should have asked for it. They should have asked for information about the risks. They should have been on top of the risk analysis. They should have been looking for the concerns

that were being raised by the project deliver. Obviously, they didn't do it.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I did receive a copy of the report the same day the people of this province received a copy of the report.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The minister just confirmed when she received the report and she just confirmed that the Premier's personally appointed CEO of Nalcor withheld that very report for a full year from his own minister and from the Premier himself.

I ask the Premier: Does that not cause you concern? Now that your minister just confirmed that your CEO withheld it from you and your minister for a full year, does that cause you concern, Premier?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**MS. COADY:** Oh, Mr. Speaker, what should cause this Legislature and this province grievous concern is the fact that the Member opposite did not know that report was done under his watch, did not know the contents of the risks involved. He could have shut down the project. What did he do? Nothing.

The people of this province now have a project that is very, very expensive, too costly for them to be able to even look at the rates that are going to be in the province for electricity. This government is having to rate manage, Mr. Speaker. It is because the former administration didn't know the risk, didn't do their homework.

Mr. Speaker, we'll be happy to do an inquiry to find out exactly what were they doing, because it wasn't managing the project properly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. P. DAVIS:** So, Mr. Speaker, the question here was very, very simple. The minister stands on her feet here and likes to criticize others and throw blame across the way and so on. I wouldn't expect anything different –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** While I may be new to this Chair, I do understand the rules around heckling. I would ask that Members only speak when they're recognized by the Speaker.

Thank you very much.

**MR. P. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, what the minister opposite has stood here and said in her rant this afternoon is that for a full year their own CEO took it from her and prevented her from seeing it, never shared it with her, never provided this, what she says very strongly here, very important information.

So I'll again ask the Premier: Does this not cause you concern that this very important information was hidden from your government for a full year?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**MS. COADY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What the Premier said moments ago is absolutely true. The Member opposite is trying to obfuscate or confuse the people of this province.

I'm going to say it again, Mr. Speaker, the former administration, the former CEO of Nalcor would have received that report, would have had the report in 2013. It was done by SNC-Lavalin who was managing the project at the time. We understand from SNC-Lavalin it

was presented to the CEO of Nalcor. All I can say is what they have told us.

I can say this, there have been multiple reports done subsequent to the development of Muskrat Falls. There's been a lot of work done. The CEO that currently is in place is doing an admirable job, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order!

**MS. COADY:** We are moving towards completion in the best way possible.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Ferryland.

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in 2015 a generic royalty regime was announced. The current administration has talked about it for some time in regard to bringing that to. It's certainly needed in the industry. Confidence in the industry wants the royalty regime.

I ask the minister: You indicated in the House some time ago it was going to be March 30, 2017, there's still no generic royalty regime. Where is it and when do we expect to get it?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**MS. COADY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the sensible question.

It is important to the people of this province to understand where we are with the generic oil royalty regime. It is something that we have been working on. There was a lot of work done by the former administration; we've been working on the foundations and basics in which they had done. A lot of work has gone into developing the regulations around that. We expect those regulations by the fall. We are working with industry.

As the Member opposite knows, we have started an oil and gas council – we're taking there. They're doing an awful lot of work and looking at strategic planning as to how we develop and

grow the oil and gas industry, how do we ensure we're competitive in this increasingly global and difficult oil and gas environment.

This has been a great year, Mr. Speaker, for new exploration and new developments in the offshore oil and gas industry.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Ferryland.

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the minister: On our producing platforms right now, or basins, are you considering any changes to the current royalty regimes that are in place now for those in production?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**MS. COADY:** Thank you again for another sensible question, Mr. Speaker.

I will say this; I was a bit surprised yesterday when I read in the media that the Member opposite was commenting that we were having some secretive meetings. That is not the case, Mr. Speaker, absolutely not the case. We're hopeful that Suncor will continue to develop the Terra Nova well, continue to move forward, but they have existing royalty regulations, they have stability and they will continue to have so.

There are no discussions going on with any of the operators, Mr. Speaker, to change their royalty regimes as they currently exist.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Ferryland.

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Suncor senior officials, executives from the Eastern Seaboard, have indicated that they have been in touch with government officials. They have registered as lobbyists here

in the province to advocate for changes to royalty regimes. That is clearly indicated in the lobbyist form that they completed, which is online.

So I ask the minister: The executives are saying they had discussions with government; you're saying they're not. Did they have discussions with Nalcor or who are they talking to? Because the executives are saying they are talking to government on these royalty regimes; you say they're not. Who is correct?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**MS. COADY:** Well, he could actually call Suncor and find that out himself, Mr. Speaker. But I will say that Suncor – I can't comment on the registry that he's referring to. There is a lobbyist registry. There are a lot of discussions going on about generic oil royalty, about oil and gas council. There are a lot of things going on.

I can't say to the specific meeting to which he is referring, but I can say I spoke with Suncor again yesterday just to confirm with them that they have not brought forward anything that I was not aware of, and they again said no, there are no discussions going on with regard to royalty or benefits with this government.

Mr. Speaker, I will say this: When they announced Statoil, Statoil wasn't aware that there were discussions going on or finalization of their imports either.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Ferryland.

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, almost two years and no response to questions regarding the federal government mandated carbon tax in terms of our oil and gas industry. When the Husky Project was announced, you said that it wasn't included in that actual project in terms of who was going to pay for the carbon tax.

Can you tell us today – Newfoundlanders and Labradorians – who is going to pay for that carbon tax, Minister?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**MS. COADY:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Carbon tax is quite a discussion that is happening in our country. We all are concerned, as we should be, about global warming and climate change, Mr. Speaker. The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, under the great direction of the Minister Responsible for Climate Change, is moving toward a made-in-Newfoundland solution. I know the Premier has had multiple discussions at the First Ministers' table concerning this.

The oil and gas industry is aware that there will be some form of carbon tax and they are preparing for that, Mr. Speaker. As we are moving forward in the development of a carbon tax for this province, we'll be keeping the competitiveness and the requirements of ensuring a pristine environment are balanced.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Ferryland.

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The announcement of the Hebron Project, the preliminary agreement that was done prior to the current administration included two gates in regard to the construction dock in Argentina. Most involved said that was an over \$100 million investment, would certainly support long-term investment and work and maintenance for that facility.

They also mentioned a \$60 million innovation fund, which in fact is a loan, because the partners are able to get that back through capital cost once the revenue flows.

So I ask the minister: Why did she give up those two key components that were already negotiated against for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador? Why did you let those go?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**MS. COADY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe – just to correct the hon. Member – it is the West White Rose Project he is referring to, not the Hebron Project.

I will say that the benefits and royalties around the West White Rose Project were in place by the former administration, Mr. Speaker. The gates to which he is referring were not required by this project. They were driving up costs; they were not required. We had multiple discussions, of course, with the Argentia Management Authority and the port of Argentia to ensure that we are doing everything to entice and grow the oil and gas business in that region.

I can tell you the people of Argentia and Placentia and, indeed, the entire province are very pleased with the increased amount of employment that will be had with the West White Rose. And, of course, now the people of the province know we have \$60 million that we will be able to reinvest to continue to grow the industry.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's been a banner year for tourism, yet vehicles are in a gridlock, bumper to bumper, waiting sometimes for hours just to drive from point A to point B. In the past two years, the Liberals have been promising that their early tendering would eliminate this.

I ask the minister: How many projects have been announced this year, but are not yet started?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It is indeed an honour to stand here as the minister responsible for Transportation and Works. Mr. Speaker, we have a \$77 million roads budget this year and there are many projects in the province that are happening. As the Member opposite would be well aware, contractors bid on many different projects and they start at different times. But I can assure you our early tendering process has certainly worked, Mr. Speaker.

As the hon. Member would also know, he was there with a government that brought out projects in September, October and November. That's not the way we are doing it. We went into a second round of contract announcements and tender calls this week and we'll continue to make sure the project get underway in our province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Liberals promised a new approach to roadwork, including a pilot project for nighttime paving. The paving season is quickly coming to an end. When is the nighttime paving supposed to start?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

In the briefings that I've had in the short six days I've been minister, that's one of the projects that's very important for us to see get off the ground. It's a project that this government took on. They were in power for 12 years and they only talked about nighttime paving. This government is going to deliver. They did not deliver in 12 years, Mr. Speaker. We will deliver. We will continue to deliver on road projects in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. John's East – Quidi Vidi.

**MS. MICHAEL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the lowest minimum wages in Canada. Government has said it might index the minimum wage, but that won't help these workers if the minimum wage is too low to start with.

I ask the Premier: Will he commit to bringing our minimum wage to a non-poverty level before indexing?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's certainly a pleasure for me to stand today in this new capacity and I thank the Premier for giving me this opportunity. The minimum wage has been something that the previous minister looked at last year. We are, in fact, making increases. There is another increase that is happening in October of 2017. I think part of the discussion that we looked at, going forward, is the idea of indexing.

Mr. Speaker, I have not yet had an opportunity to really get into that file and to have any further discussions on that, but certainly looking forward to it. I think it's important for us to all realize that there is an engagement that has to take place. It's not just the employees. There are employers out there. There are small business people that are out there. So I think there is a whole discussion that we need to have on that. We will continue to do that to make the right decision for the people in this province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. John's East – Quidi Vidi.

**MS. MICHAEL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the minister then: Will his government commit to raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour, as other jurisdictions are doing, so these workers won't be condemned to earn poverty wages forever?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think I was fairly clear in saying that, as we move forward, there is an increase in the minimum wage coming in October of 2017.

Prior to the discussions that were made in looking at whether we are going to be indexing that particular rate or whether we are looking at a new rate, that's a discussion that we need to have. As I stated earlier, it's a discussion that we need to have with consultation, not only with employers, but also we look at small business people because there is an impact on everybody when it comes to looking at these costs. Somewhere along the line we have to have that discussion and we will certainly look at that, and when the time comes for that decision, the House will certainly be aware of that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. John's Centre.

**MS. ROGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The specialized services of the family and child office of the Legal Aid Commission in St. John's provided a multi-team approach, especially to families dealing with the complex issues of child protection. The closure of this office cuts the much needed services to some of the most vulnerable families in our provinces and consequently cuts the services to some of the most vulnerable children.

The closure of this office is similar to the closure of the Family Violence Intervention Court. It is penny wise and pound foolish, costing the

system more money and more court time in the long run.

I ask the Minister of Justice: Will he commit the funds necessary to re-establish the family and child office of Legal Aid in St. John's?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm happy to stand here and speak to legal aid, and as the Member would know, these are decisions that are made by Legal Aid; they're certainly not made by me as a minister. That being said, I did meet with the board and executive of Legal Aid to discuss this and other matters this morning.

The issue simply is that we've seen an uptake in demand as it relates to Legal Aid when it comes to criminal files, when it comes to family files, and they had to make very difficult decisions. The fact is we have stretched resources across the way, so that's something I've talked to them about.

One of the issues that we see is a significant increase when it comes to choice of counsel, so private lawyers getting legal aid money. When you see a budget there that basically is almost doubled or tripled, that's something that we're going to work on here. When we see private members getting this increase, we need to figure this way out.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. John's Centre.

**MS. ROGERS:** Mr. Speaker, this is the result of budgetary decisions by this government.

Mr. Speaker, community agencies working with the family and child office of the Legal Aid office know how valuable this office is and state that fewer children end up in care because of the collaborative work they do with the office and with the families and with the courts.

So I ask the minister: Will he meet with these groups to hear their concerns about the closure of the family and child office?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The first thing I say is that the Member is wrong in that this was a budgetary decision of this government. That's clearly not accurate whatsoever. This was a decision that was made by Legal Aid.

The second part of my answer would be that I've already heard from a number of these groups and I've spoken to them and I will continue to do so. Legal aid is a necessary part of our system, one that I'm very familiar with and know the great work that these lawyers do.

But the fact is we have financial pressures which come from an increasing number of matters that are going through Legal Aid and the significant amount we pay private lawyers, some of whom we see in the news every day. When that budget doubles and triples what we're spending there, we have a serious issue that leads to declines in other parts of the system.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. John's Centre for a quick question. No preamble, please.

**MR. ROGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Minister of Justice: Will he provide the necessary resources to Legal Aid to cover the extra costs due to the high number of murder cases so other specialized services of Legal Aid will not be cut?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



I'm always happy – again, I met with Legal Aid today to discuss this matter, but it's not as simple as what the Member is suggesting, to just take extra money and throw out there.

The fact is that we have resources that we have to live within. I know Members on the other side that voted themselves a raise this year; certainly, that wasn't an issue when we talk about Legal Aid and the money that they need.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The time for Oral Questions is over.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

### Petitions

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Bell Island.

**MR. BRAZIL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's the beautiful District of Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Conception Bay East – Bell Island. I apologize.

**MR. BRAZIL:** Bell Island is a very important part of it with our new ferry, the *Legionnaire*, now in place and the dock built and completed. My hon. Member for – I'd like to mention that. It's wonderful – wonderful.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BRAZIL:** Just have to allow the minister now to allow us to park on it. That's why we built it.

Mr. Speaker, to the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the education of children is one of the most important and vital investments that can be made in the success of children; and

WHEREAS the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador should be choosing educational options that will provide all students in our province with a higher standard of education and enhance the learning experience for our youth; and

WHEREAS the government decision to make cuts to teachers in our education system will negatively impact the students;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to reverse these decisions effective immediately.

Mr. Speaker, we had an opportunity in the last sitting of the House to debate and discuss the cuts to our education system. Since then, we've had a very intensive and a very thorough report by the task force that outlined 82 recommendations that reflect people's view on how we improve our educational outcomes here and how we support the education system, Mr. Speaker.

A lot of them point to things that have been cut over the last two budgets and particularly, two budgets ago. What's being outlined there is a reflection of people's view on knowing. If you're going to invest in people, you have to invest in their education system.

You have to start with our young people; you have to prepare them to be our productive citizens. You have to use the education system to prevent other issues that may occur as they go through their lifelong learning, particularly around mental health, physical education, financial stability and learning, also about all the other challenges that come as part of our education system, particularly about inclusive education.

I know we had a comprehensive inclusive education design that ended with its implementation process the last number of months ago, and it was determined that it wasn't as effective as we would have hoped it would have been, and that all the stakeholders have now weighed in and said, you know what, we need to find a better approach. The task force has outlined the number of approaches they think would be the best way to do it.

What needs to be done now, there has to be some prioritizing of how it's going to be done. There has to be some acknowledgement that there has to be resources invested. There has to be an acknowledgement that you have to look at the present resources you have within the education system and find the best way that you can resource those, but also use them in other areas where the priority lists need to be addressed. You also have to develop partnerships with the private sector, the not-for-profit sector, agencies that have expertise in those areas, and particularly the communities, on how we better prepare our students for better outcomes.

All the information that was given, hundreds of people presented from all different backgrounds and all different concerns within the education system, but particularly the educators themselves, those who, day in and day out, have assessed the challenges, what's needed, how we can better change the process, how we can better address some of the issues. We've been fortunate over the last decade or so that we've invested in the structural part of it. Our school systems, from a physical point of view, are in good shape. There's still work to be done, but they're in physically decent shape. Maybe we need to look at our physical monies and move that into our human resource money and our program money. They're decisions that need to be made.

As you can see by the petitioners here, Mr. Speaker, they've outlined exactly their concerns. This now falls well in play with the task force recommendations. The minister had pointed out at one point that the sky is not falling; this is not an immediate thing that needs attention. Yes, it is. This is another indication that this has to be done; it has to be addressed immediately.

I understand you can't do all 82 recommendations immediately but you have to prioritize. What are the immediate things that we can do right now that will have a major impact? Or what are the things that are the critical part of the needs in our school system to ensure our students have better outcomes and have a better choice for their educational needs and at the end of the day become more productive citizens and meet their full potential.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further petitions?

Guidance, please.

I recognize the Member for St. John's Centre.

**MS. ROGERS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS government has removed the provincial point-of-sale tax rebate on books, which will raise the tax on books from 5 per cent to 15 per cent; and

WHEREAS an increase in the tax on books will reduce book sales to the detriment of local bookstores, publishers and authors, and the amount collected by government must be weighed against the loss in economic activity caused by higher book prices; and

WHEREAS Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the lowest literacy rates in Canada and the other provinces do not tax books because they recognize the need to encourage reading and literacy; and

WHEREAS this province has many nationally and internationally known storytellers, but we will be the only people in Canada who will have to pay our provincial government a tax to read the books of our own writers;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government not to impose a provincial sales tax on books.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, our students will be returning to school in a month and they will be faced – particularly our students who will be returning to MUN – with extra fees, extra costs. For some, a significant amount of money per semester as well as the extra fees, the extra taxes on books. For some, it will be in the hundreds of dollars, just the extra taxes alone.

Government will say about even MUN: Well, we didn't do that, MUN is doing that. In fact, Mr. Speaker, what is happening is that government has done that. By the last two budgets they are forcing the hands the same way the Minister of Justice is saying: Well, I didn't make those decisions, Legal Aid made those decisions. But their hand is forced because of the overall budgeting afforded to some of these agencies and services to our people.

We know there is a rise in court procedures because of the poverty and the economic stress that people are feeling. So when you look at what's happening with our students at MUN, it isn't MUN's fault. I believe that what's happened is that our students and MUN have been burned. They have been burned by the last budget and that's what they're experiencing, Mr. Speaker.

Government can't sit there and wash their hands of this. Government has a direct responsibility. They have been burned, no less than having been burned by the economic policies of this government.

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

**MS. ROGERS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** I recognize the Government House Leader.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would move at this time, after such an exciting day, that the House do now adjourn, seconded by the Premier.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It has been moved that the House do now adjourn.

All in favour?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Against?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Nay.

**MR. SPEAKER:** So carried.

This House stands adjourned to the Call of the Chair.

On motion, the House adjourned to the Call of the Chair.