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SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE JAMES M. RUSSELL

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. T.A. HICKMAN (MINISTER OF JUSTICE): Mr. Speaker, I am sure all Newfoundlanders were very much saddened to learn of the untimely death of Mrs. Elizabeth Vera Perlin of St. John's. Mrs. Perlin has been an outstanding Newfoundland citizen who has made a tremendous contribution to the well-being of the people of this province. Her record and activities and leadership and compassion, particularly in the field of providing assistance to retarded children and programmes for their rehabilitation, is well-known far beyond the confines of our province.

The late Mrs. Perlin was the founder of the Newfoundland Association for the Help of Retarded Children. Her work in that field was very properly recognized by our nation when there was conferred upon her in 1968 the Order of Canada. Our own university recognized her work within the province when they conferred upon Mrs. Perlin an honorary Doctorate of Law Degree in 1967.

One of the great but very, very deserved tributes paid to her was by the National Council of Jewish Women when she was named the Newfoundland Woman of the Century. Indeed it can be said that Mrs. Perlin during her lifetime, which very rarely happens, was recognized by our people from time to time because as far back as 1962 she was nominated and elected as the first Newfoundlander to be named the citizen of the year.

I would think that the late Mrs. Perlin would want no better recognition or no greater monument to her than the works we see around us that resulted from her compassionate leadership and that it will be forever remembered in the Vera Perlin School for Retarded Children.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that I voice the sentiments, not only of all Newfoundlanders but indeed of many Canadians throughout this nation. I am quite certain of all members of this honourable House when I move a resolution which I trust and I know will be seconded by some honourable gentleman from across the House, that we extend to Mr. Albert Perlin, his

daughter Ann and their sons George and John Perlin our greatest and deepest sympathy in the loss of this outstanding Newfoundland, christian lady.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we do indeed join with the acting Premier in seconding the resolution to extend sympathy to Mr. A.B. Perlin and the family of the late Mrs. Vera Perlin. Newfoundland, Sir, has lost one of her finest citizens. The acting Premier has traced some of the outstanding achievements of the late Mrs. Vera Perlin. I can concur and endorse every word that was uttered by the acting Premier in this honourable House this afternoon,

Sir. I can say from my own personal experiences, acting as Minister of Social Services and Rehabilitation, that on many occasions, Sir, I sought the advice of Mrs. Perlin and when I did not seek her advice, she was there to volunteer any suggestions or ideas that she thought might help my department and the province in helping the cause of mentally retarded children in this province.

So, Sir, we on this side of the House join with the acting Premier in the resolution of sympathy to the family of the late Mrs. Perlin.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS:

HON. G. OTTENHEIMER (MINISTER OF EDUCATION): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have a statement to make but before so making, I naturally wish to associate myself and the Department of Education with the views expressed by the acting Premier and by the honourable member for Bell Island. Certainly the late Mrs. Perlin played a very real and very important role in the life of this province with respect to the care and education of retarded children. A number of government departments naturally during the past number of years have had close connection with Mrs. Perlin. I suppose the Department of Education perhaps more so than any other department and certainly those of us, not only from the government's point of view, from the professional educators' point of view, fully recognize the tremendous contribution that she has made and we join in the expressions of sympathy which have been expressed. There is no doubt that the late Mrs. Perlin in her own way, drew the conscience of the province and the conscience of the government of the province to the needs of those young boys and girls who through no fault of their own, were born with difficulties that the majority do not have. Certainly we wish to join with the other members of the House who have expressed our sympathy.

Mr. Speaker, I wish also today to announce the policy of this government with respect to the whole question of the holding of plebiscites on the question of school taxation. This matter of the holding of plebiscites on school taxation has been expressed to the best of my knowledge essentially two ways. One, that there be a plebiscite on the question as to whether there should be school taxation, that is whether certain costs of the operation of education should be the responsibility

of regional areas or whether the entire financing of education should be the sole and exclusive responsibility of the central government. That is one way in which it has been put. Another way in which it has been put is that there should be a plebiscite as to what specific form school taxation should take.

This question of a plebiscite - I should say that I am speaking now from extended notes. I will have a copy of the statement to distribute in about an hour or thirty or forty minutes time. This question of a plebiscite on school taxation first came to my attention resulting from a meeting organized by Councillor, Ray O'Neil, a member of the St. John's Municipal Council.

It came to my attention via the press not in any specific correspondence and which secondly; it came to my attention and this by way of a letter dated yesterday from the honourable Member for St. John's South. So there may be, you know, humourous people or an incalculable number of people suggesting plebiscite or not, in effect, it has come to me from two sources; one; a meeting organized by Councillor Ray O'Neil and secondly; a letter from the signature of the honourable Member for St. John's South.

I should say it is not, Mr. Speaker, it is not the intention of the government of this province to reverse the tradition and practice of parliamentary government throughout Canada and throughout the British Commonwealth, we do, you know, inherit, we do operate under, we do work under a parliamentary government and certain traditions and practices of parliamentary government. It is not the intention of this government to reverse that tradition and that practice by resorting to a plebiscite on questions of taxation. I think it is generally known that taxation is not a matter on which elected and responsible governments conduct plebiscites. The accountability of governments is the accountability of the electoral process. It is not - (Pardon me?) It is not the accountability of plebiscites. The accountability of governments in a parliamentary system is the accountability of the electoral process.

I am not aware, Mr. Speaker, that any city council in this province has or intends to conduct a plebiscite on any proposal to increase municipal taxation. I am not aware that the Council of St. John's or of Corner Brook or of any municipally incorporated area intends to surrender its responsibility for decision-making by resorting to a plebiscite. I am not aware either, Mr. Speaker, that any government of any province, in Confederation, has resorted to a plebiscite to determine whether, number one, it shall have a sales tax and number two; what rate its sales tax should be or what its participation in personal income tax would be or a corporation tax would be. I am not aware that any provincial government has done that. Nor am I aware that the federal government have at any time conducted a plebiscite to determine

number one, whether there should be an income tax or a corporation tax and what its level should be.

In the parliamentary system of government it is the responsibility of government to make this decision. As I said at the beginning, it is not the intention of this government to repudiate, to alter, to change the tradition and practice of the parliamentary system by abdicating its responsibility by resorting to a plebiscite on a question of taxation. So I should say, again, and I say in one sentence; that it is not the intention of the government to hold a plebiscite with respect to the question of school taxation or of any form of taxation, municipal taxation, provincial taxation any more than it is the intention of any province of Canada to have a plebiscite on provincial taxation any more than it is the intention of the Government of Ottawa to have a plebiscite with respect to federal taxation. The accountability with respect to taxation as with respect to many policy matters, is the accountability that government owes the electorate in which is expressed in elections.

Secondarily and just to clarify a point because there seems to be a fair amount of misunderstanding with respect to this, regarding the school tax authority for the St. John's Area, the government decided and announced its decisions some months ago that such an authority would be established. It has been established. It is

established. That authority recently submitted to government a specific programme of taxation. Officials of various government departments, specifically Justice, Finance, Municipal Affairs and Education, officials of those departments of government are now studying and examining the specific taxation proposals of the tax authority with respect to it, feasibility. When the study has been completed which I envision to be no longer than a two week period but when this study has been completed then I shall be announcing the government's decision with respect to, not the establishment of a school tax authority which has already been established but with respect to the specific proposal, the specific recommendations of taxation which have been suggested by the authority.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member from St. Barbe North.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Minister of Education's statement dealt with two things: (1) The government's policy with respect to plebiscites with respect to a school tax authority; (2) With school tax authorities themselves. I would like to comment on these two points. First of all, Sir, I think I speak on behalf of my colleagues when I say that we totally agree with the minister in that the holding of a plebiscite to settle the school tax authority controversy is not the right thing to do. It would, I would submit, cause further controversy and it would in fact cost the taxpayers of this Province more money than they are being asked to pay at the present time.

Sir, so we completely agree with the minister as far as that is concerned, We feel that it is the government's responsibility to act on this matter and this is the very thing for which they were elected to do, to act on matters like this. We would expect, and we have been disappointed so far in the fact that the government has not grappled successfully with the controversy of the school tax authority business. Sir, I feel that the minister in his statement was evading partially the whole issue of the school tax authority problem and there is something that I would like for the minister to study or get civil servants working on when he says they are in the process of working this whole business out now.

Sir, last year the operating vote in the Department of Education was

approximately \$15 million. The capital vote was approximately \$10 million for a total of \$25 million. Now, Sir, this is supposed to represent the ninety-five per cent of the Provincial Government's input which would mean that the local input which the minister stated should be only five per cent should amount to only about \$1.5 million. However, Sir, the minister stated recently in this House that they are expecting to collect approximately \$8 million through school taxes in the coming year and we can add on to that school assessments and this represents thirty-two per cent, thirty-two per cent of the operating and capital vote on education.

I would submit, Sir, that the local school boards and the school tax authorities are being asked to contribute more than the stated five per cent of the total operating and capital grants. Now, if I am mistaken we can straighten this out during the consideration of the estimates but according to the estimates, Sir, this is the way I figure it. If \$8 million represents five per cent, well the total capital and operating costs or vote from the government should be in the order of \$157 million but it is only \$25 million.

Sir, I submit, that what we need, instead of the minister pontificating on whether plebiscites should be held or not, I would suggest that he should grapple with this whole problem of financing education in this Province and accept the total and full responsibility for capital and operating costs in education and do away with the duplication and the controversy in the difficulties and the inequities that exist with respect to the present school tax authorities.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that the honourable member's remarks are out of order in that they are argumentative and I would go on to say that he has made an arithmetically inaccurate calculation of government expenditures by adding two subheads and leaving out numerous other subheads and that in fact it is a miscalculation on which the honourable gentleman's remarks were made.

MR. F. ROWE: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, I submit that my calculations - you can do practically anything with statistics, percentages and averages but my calculations were based on the estimates contained in the budget from last year and I submit they were not inaccurate.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I would like to go a little bit further on that point of order, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that it is a question of not what adding two points make up but it is how many things you add together. However, it is somewhat academic I would say.

MR. ROBERTS: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The point of order raised by the honourable Minister of Education, I consider not to be a point of order but a difference of opinion between two honourable members.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Inaudible.

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

Are there any other ministerial statements?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN:

HON. DR. T.C. FARRELL (MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND SERVICES): Yesterday, Your Honour, the honourable member for Bell Island asked me for some information on the Health Science Complex. My officials are looking into the matter. I hope to have an answer for them tomorrow if that is satisfactory, Sir.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Provincial Affairs under whose jurisdiction falls the responsibility for consumer affairs in this province. Would the minister indicate to the House what action the government has taken on the recommendation of the report

on food prices in Newfoundland to establish a separate ministry of consumer affairs in the provincial government?

HON. G. DAWE (MINISTER OF PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS): Mr. Speaker, that question and topic is obviously the prerogative of the Premier. If he in his wisdom decides that this province needs a separate Department of Consumer Affairs, then he will make that decision, I do not.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am dissatisfied with that answer and I want to debate the matter in the late show later on this afternoon.

Sir, I wonder if the Minister of Education could tell the House if the instructor at the Gander Vocational School has yet been reinstated, the instructor who was dismissed some time ago at the Gander District Vocational School, if she has been reinstated yet?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Now, I presume the honourable gentleman is referring to the case which was before an Arbitration Board.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: And which the Arbitration Board has recently, within the past ten, more or less, days reported. Certainly the findings of the Arbitration Board, which is binding on both parties, will be implemented. Whether that person has already been reinstated or is about to be reinstated, I do not know but I can give the honourable gentleman assurance that certainly the findings of the Arbitration Board, which are binding on both parties, will be implemented. Whether that has been communicated now to the particular individual or not, I do not know. I will undertake to find out and let the honourable gentleman know within a day or so.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister could tell us whether the other enquiry that was carried out into the administration of the Gander Vocational School is under the minister's jurisdiction or under the Minister of Justice? Which minister appointed Magistrate LeClair from Port aux Basques to investigate? The Minister of Education?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: No, the Minister of Justice appoints the Commission of Enquiry but it is an area of investigation within the jurisdiction of the Department of Education. It is the Minister of Justice who in fact -

MR. NEARY: Okay. Will the Minister of Justice inform the House if

Magistrate LeClair has yet completed his enquiry into the administration of the District Vocational School in Gander?

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, Magistrate LeClair has not completed his report as yet.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I have a noncontroversial question for the Minister of Education today. Would the minister table in this House, Sir, the amount of money collected by the

school boards throughout the province through school assessments last year and if the figures are available also for this year, that would be outside the jurisdiction of school tax authorities. The amount of money collected by the various school boards throughout the province in school assessments for last year and if the figures are available what it would be for this year?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, to make sure that I understand the question correctly; it is the request to table the amount collected in assessments last year and a projected amount for this year, which would obviously be an estimated amount in assessments? Yes, I will undertake to get that.

MR. F. ROWE: Broken down by school boards.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Pardon?

MR. F. ROWE: Broken down by school boards.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Yes, in assessments, it can be broken down by school boards. In taxes it can only be broken down essentially in the school tax authorities but in assessments it can be broken down by school boards, yes.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Education again, a supplementary. He mentioned about the second question that I was going to ask. Would the minister indicate per school tax authorities how much money was collected in school taxes last year and the projected amount for the coming year as well? Could the minister as well try to give some indication because I am having remarkably little success in getting the information tabled from the minister, would he indicate when he will be able to table this information? We wish to get this notice to study it.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education is a fount of information, I do not know why the honourable gentleman finds any difficulty in getting information from the Department of Education, everybody else has no problem. I cannot understand - we are a fount of information-only this morning we had a call from the Minister of Justice to find out some matter and a couple of phone calls

from a couple of other honourable members. We are always a fount of information but certainly we shall be pleased to provide and, I think, the two questions should be answered in one; because in areas where there is no taxation there are assessments, that is just about one hundred per cent true, areas either have assessments or taxation. So what we should do is table the various school tax areas the amount collected in the past year and in areas working on assessments for school boards, the amount collected during the past year with an estimate of what will be collected in the forthcoming year, which is now in progress.

We shall certainly undertake to provide that and I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the honourable gentleman's remarks which said he had difficulty in getting information are really most unkind and uncalled for because if there is any department which is a fount of information, it is the Department of Education.

MR. F. ROWE: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, if I hurt the honourable minister's feelings.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Labrador South.

MR. M. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, my first question is directed to the Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications. I wonder if he could inform the House how work is progressing on the translating of the Report of the Royal Commission on Labrador and to the Inuit, in three languages?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

HON. J. G. ROUSSEAU: (MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS):

The question, of course, originally had to be brought up with the federal/provincial committee on native peoples which is presently negotiating. They suggested to us that there would be money available for it. The last I heard, although I am transcending on the department and my colleagues, the ministers, that the Assistant Deputy Minister responsible was trying to find somebody who could translate because there are several dialects involved and so on and so forth but I have been away for a couple of weeks and I have not had the chance to check since the middle of November but I will undertake to check

it, unless the member has any further information. He does not? I will try and find out the exact status for him tomorrow but it has been agreed by the federal/provincial committee. The only problem now is to find somebody who would translate it to the correct type of language that people up there could understand.

MR. M. MARTIN: A supplementary to that, Mr. Speaker. Is it the intention of the government to translate all the volumes of the report or just the short version?

MR. ROUSSEAU: I understand the agreement was to translate the short version plus the 288 recommendations.

MR. M. MARTIN: Fine. Thank you!

My next question, Mr. Speaker, is directed to the Hon. Minister of Mines and Energy. It refers to a symposium which was held recently at Memorial sponsored, I think, by Memorial concerning the

development of the offshore oil and the onshore areas adjacent thereto. I am wondering whether or not his department has any plans to implement programmes for the involvement of local people in the development area and if he has no plans whether or not he anticipates drawing up such plans? If plans are all ready underway, what is the procedure for local people getting input into those plans? Is he accepting briefs or what is the situation?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Mines and Energy

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, this is not an easy question to answer, in a few minutes. I will try but neither is it an easy question to file an answer to because you could spend years hearing information that relates directly to the honourable member's question. Just to clarify his preface this symposium which was organized by the university was also sponsored by the Department of Mines and Energy in that we provided financial assistance to the university to bring in people from areas where there are now offshore developments such as Norway and Scotland. Many of these people we have spoken with before and many of the matters, I would say all of the matters discussed at the symposium had previously been brought to my attention as minister or to the attention of members, officials of the Department of Mines and Energy. I say that only to point out that it is not only since the symposium at the university that our department or our government has been concerned in this area. This is a matter of record, Mr. Speaker. I think if you look back at previous comments in this honourable House on my part, if you look at past editions, Mr. Speaker, of this weekly offshore report that the Department of Mines and Energy has been publishing I think you will find over the last year approximately that this has been published that articles in this touch on, I would say, just about every area brought up at the symposium.

The question is a very good one. It is a very significant one, one that is very important as far as our government is concerned, Mr. Speaker. When this administration took office, the first thing, one of the very first things it saw was necessary to do was to get some control over offshore

development. We have now reached the stage where all the companies operating offshore are supplying the Department of Mines and Energy with information with respect to their drilling operations, information with respect to the results of tests and so on. We get this information, Mr. Speaker, at times on a daily basis when there is something significant about to happen. We get the same information as the Federal Department of Mines and Energy is getting. As a matter of fact, we get more, I believe, in some areas than that department is interested in obtaining. One of the first conditions we have set in issuing these exploration permits to companies operating offshore is that where it is, I think the wording goes to the effect, that where it is commercially feasible or where it can be competitive in terms of price, delivery and quality that these firms, these companies operating offshore have to give preference to Newfoundland employment, to employment from within Newfoundland. They have to give preference to the use of Newfoundland goods and services.

Now, this can only go so far, Mr. Speaker, and in no way would I want to imply here that we are satisfied with the amount of money that is being spent in the Province as a spinoff from offshore activity but we have to recognize some economic facts of life. We have to recognize for example that at the present time while the companies are still at the stage where they are going out and investing large amounts of money in an attempt to find oil and gas, that we are limited as to the controls we can impose in terms of who they employ and where they buy their goods and services. For example, at the present time off Labrador the operator is Eastcan Limited. The rig employed there, the drill ship employed there is a French constructed ship. It is

operated by a French company. It is chartered to the company with a French crew. When it leaves Labrador after four months drilling in the summertime, it may go off Morocco, off Algeria, off Africa, off the North Sea. So, the crew moves with the ship and it is extremely difficult in that type of situation to be able to make the companies employ a total Newfoundland crew for example. I give this just purely as one example of the type of difficulty and the type of fact that we have to recognize as being a reality.

However, Mr. Speaker, where possible and we believe we are getting co-operation from the oil companies here, where it is possible the companies know that they have to employ Newfoundlanders, they have to make use of Newfoundland goods and services. When we get to the stage, Mr. Speaker, as we will, that we have commercial production of offshore oil or gas or both, then you are into a different ball game. Then it is going to be easier for this government to say to the companies, "You now see that you are going to be operating here, drilling for the next ten years or eight years or five years, whatever. Now, let us see over the next period of time, let us see you make a conscious effort to employ as many Newfoundlanders, say, as a crew for your drill ship, as many Newfoundlanders in supplying you with services as you can."

In other words, there are varying degrees of control that we will be able to exercise at varying times. Now, at the present time, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I would like to interrupt the honourable minister. I have to agree with him that his answer is taking a considerable amount of time. Perhaps I should have interjected earlier. It is a question of the type that perhaps should require a tabled written answer.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a point of information then, Sir. Will Your Honour now allow us to turn back the clock, Sir? In view of the fact that the minister has used up eight minutes, Sir, of the question period would Your Honour allow us to turn back the clock eight minutes?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I am sure as the honourable member for Bell Island is aware, that the Standing Orders of this House say the question period shall be thirty minutes and that is all it shall be.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, if I could - I am not clear on Your Honour's ruling. I could sum up very quickly in a minute or two. I do not intend to prejudice the honourable members opposite from having time for their questions. I could sum this up just to terminate the question -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: The minister is filibustering.

MR. BARRY: If I could just have a minute. With respect to the existing situation, we have first of all before we can get into, say, a retraining programme for Newfoundlanders to get them to the stage where they can move into potential employment offshore, first of all we have to know where the activity is going to be carried out offshore, where for example, the oil and gas is going to be found.

Now, it looks very much like the first commercial production is going to be off Labrador. It is going to take another seasons drilling to really confirm that. By this time next year, hopefully -

MR. NEARY: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. I distinctly heard Your Honour direct the minister to cut his remarks short and take his seat and the minister is not obeying Your Honour's ruling. Would Your Honour care to ask the minister to take his seat, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I did remark that the minister was taking a considerable amount of time in answering the question. Perhaps it should have been one that required a tabled answer. I permitted and will permit the honourable minister for approximately another thirty seconds to finish up and then I shall recognize another member.

MR. BARRY: Your Honour, that is what I asked. I thought I had another minute. So, Mr. Speaker, there are certain things that have to be determined. Where is the oil and gas going to be produced? Where is the onshore activity going to be? What type of onshore activity is there going to be? We are very conscious of the need for protecting the fragile social structure of the smaller communities such as on the Coast of Labrador. You cannot just have in massive industrial opportunities

which may be only for a few years. All of these things have to be considered. I am perfectly prepared, Your Honour, to supply the honourable member with any sort of detail that he would like further on this. It is going to be an ongoing process to ensure that the proper planning is done to get the total involvement of the inhabitants and the natives of Coastal Labrador.

MR. MURPHY: One of the finest answers I have heard yet in the House.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable minister for his very loquacious answer. If he will be so kind as to

table that we might be able to have a look at it. My next question is for the honourable the Minister of Fisheries. I wonder if he would table for the House the detailed cost breakdown of the operation of the barge which was operating in Hogan or Emily Harbour this summer?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! If I heard the honourable member correctly I think he addressed his question to the Minister of Fisheries who I do not think is in his seat at the present moment.

The honourable member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could get the attention of the acting Premier for a moment. I wonder if the acting Premier would inform the House if the government intends to erect a new building to replace the Terra Nova Shoe Factory destroyed by fire last Saturday in Harbour Grace?

MR. HICKMAN: Would the honourable gentleman repeat the question?

MR. NEARY: Is it the intention of the government to erect a new building to replace the Terra Nova Shoe Factory destroyed by fire last Saturday in Harbour Grace?

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the government is certainly not in any position to give an indication or any commitment on that important matter at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Barbe North.

MR. F. ROVE: A question to the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker: In view of the fact that the Minister of Education's Department is a fountain of information, could I ask the minister what happened to the Harris Report and the list of expenditures of the various school tax authorities in the Province?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, as I informed the honourable gentleman no later than yesterday, no later than yesterday, Sir, we shall be tabling all of this information next week. This is Thursday; that leaves Friday -

MR. ROVE: He said that last week too.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: And Saturday and Sunday we do not sit usually and that leaves next week. Mr. Speaker, I informed the honourable gentleman the same thing; I informed him no later than yesterday that this information will be tabled next week.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bonavista North.

MR. P. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. In view of the fact that his department or this government have bought the holdings of Reid in Newfoundland, could the minister inform this House if all Reid lands now have been properly transferred to the Crown?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. H. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I can answer that question properly because there is some legal work to be done on it but I will certainly take it under advice and get an answer for the honourable member.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. COLLINS: Who asked you? Who asked you?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Can the Minister of Justice, Sir, tell the House what has happened to the Civil Marriages Act?

MR. HICKMAN: Was that question directed to me?

MR. NEARY: Yes.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, for the edification of the honourable the Member for Bell Island, there is no such thing as a Civil Marriages Act. There was an act passed by this legislature this year, the Solemnization of Marriage Act, which contains in it provisions for civil marriage as well as provisions for the issuing of marriage licences and indeed a total reform in the whole marriage, the legalistic side of the marriage procedures. We have been working very assiduously, the draftsmen in my department, to prepare the necessary regulations that are required and must be enacted at the time the act is proclaimed and also the necessary forms that will be used. The date we were aiming for and this was the date I indicated at the time the bill was presented in the House, December 31. We will probably have the regulations and forms completed by then but I suspect ordinary prudence would dictate that they be circularized to the heads of the churches as I have done with a large number of copies of the act so that they can familiarize themselves with it. I think the official suggestion, December 31 - I think January 31 is a more realistic date.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bonavista North.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. Could the minister inform this honourable House if there are any farm equipment banks set up in the Province

at the present time and if there are, could he inform us of their location?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

HON. H. COLLINS (MINISTER OF FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURE): Mr. Speaker, there are some farm banks being set up and the programmes have been enlarged. It is another one of the major steps which this government have taken in trying to bring about better services to the people particularly those involved in agriculture. I will certainly get the list of locations for the honourable member.

MR. THOMS: Did I get the answer correctly? Are there farm equipped banks in Newfoundland in existence at the present time? And if so, where are they?

MR. COLLINS: I said I would give them to you later.

MR. THOMS: I hate to think that the minister is misleading this honourable House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The honourable Member for Bonavista North is proceeding to make a speech and I am sure he knows it is out of order during the question period.

The honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. S. A. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, as much as I hate to do it, I want to direct a question to the Hon. Minister of Mines and Energy. Could the minister be very brief in his answer?

MR. BARRY: No, he could not.

MR. NEARY: Sir, the Green Bay Mining Company was shut down recently, I wonder if the minister could tell us just how the Green Bay Mining operation is doing now? Has the government had to put any more money into it or are they operating in the black?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: There are only five minutes left for question period.

The Hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

HON. L. R. BARRY (MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY): Mr. Speaker, this would take me about three days also. Briefly, as I understand it, there was a problem that developed, Mr. Speaker, with the Green Bay Mine.

I have to confess I have not had any recent information in the last month but about one month ago,

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. BARRY: I am not sure, I will check that out. In August, Mr. Speaker, the company was having difficulty because of the fact that it had not built up a stockpile of ore because it was attempting to start work on two faces, it was losing efficiency because it was only operating on one face or in one slope. After blasting, for example, it had to stop work until the dust settled and it was losing efficiency that way. It wanted a shutdown, Mr. Speaker, and decided on a shutdown, in order to (1) to enable it to build up a stockpile of ore so that there would be a continuous operation in the mill while the mining was going on, and (2) to permit greater efficiency in mining so that they could get a second face developed, so that it could operate on two fronts, and thereby acquire greater efficiency.

Financially there were problems, as I understand. Obviously it is a marginal operation. It is good in that it is a locally financed operation but it is limited in financing and inflation, Mr. Speaker, has hit there just as it has hit every other operation. I understand that there was a new financing arrangement made between it and the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation. I do not have all of the details but I will get them for the honourable member.

MR. NEARY: I understand from the Member for Green Bay that they are back to work now.

MR. BARRY: They are back to work now, Sir?

MR. NEARY: November, I think, they went back to work.

MR. PECKFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, if I can just add a word. They have been back to work for some time. They had a down-time of something like eighteen to twenty-one days, so that they could stockpile enough ore to keep the mill going. They have had a shipment of concentrate sent to Quebec. A ship was in about two or three weeks ago, so the thing is moving along on a much better basis than it was before.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Health could bring us up to date on the poor old denturists - what is happening concerning the denturists?

AN HON. MEMBER: They had a bite taken out of them.

MR. NEARY: They had more than a bite taken out of them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Health.

HON. DR. A. ROWE (MINISTER OF HEALTH): Mr. Speaker, we recently announced the appointment of a Chairman to advise the government with its committee on the type of legislation which should be brought in. Legislation is being prepared and hopefully it may be received by this House within the next session.

MR. NEARY: In the next session.

DR. A. ROWE: It may be, I am not saying definitely.

MR. NEARY: Who is the Chairman?

DR. A. ROWE: Mr. George Parsons is the Chairman.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for, I think, it is for the Minister of Agriculture and Resources. Has the minister - he probably saw the reports about cruelty to animals in some of the department stores, in St. John's. Has the minister launched an investigation into these reports. I understand there has been prosecution by the S.P.C.A? Is the minister doing anything -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: There answer on that side of the House, Sir -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: I do not know if the minister is doing anything about that or not.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! That question is not one that demands or requires an immediate answer, and as such, it is out of order. I will permit one more question if the honourable member has one.

MR. NEARY: Yes, I want to get back to the Minister of Health again, Sir, the minister has now straightened out the denturists. Could he

tell us what is happening concerning the high cost of drugs in this province. Is there being anything done about that?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: That is right. I do not peddle beer like you used to.

MR. MURPHY: I am proud of it too.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Health.

DR. A. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated -

MR. MURPHY: An honest decent living.

DR. A. ROWE: We are looking at,

I am trying to draw up a programme of some assistance on the cost of drugs for the certain groups within the province. We are particularly concerned with the low income earner and the old age pension people on fixed incomes. We are looking at the possibility of a formula for the province which would allow the pharmacists to prescribe the lowest type cost drug of any type provided the doctor did not specify there was to be no substitution.

MR. NEARY: Inaudible.

DR. ROWE: I did not say that.

MR. NEARY: Could we have a commitment?

DR. ROWE: No, you cannot have a commitment.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No commitment?

DR. ROWE: No commitment. The programme is being drawn up. Whether government can find the funds to bring in this programme, I am not in a position to say.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Nothing is going to be done until the next session?

DR. ROWE: Lots is being done but I cannot tell you a decision as to whether we will spend the money that is going to be made.

MR. NEARY: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The time for the question period has expired. Before we get into Orders of the Day, I would inform honourable members that there are two questions today for our late show. One was asked yesterday by the honourable member for St. John's North of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The other was asked today by the honourable member for Bell Island of the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment. These are the two which will be debated today at five-thirty.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague, the Minister of Mines and Energy, with leave of the House, would like to give notice of a bill if we have leave for it.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the honourable Minister of Mines and Energy have leave to give notice?

MR. ROBERTS: How long will he need, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Does the honourable member have leave? There appears not to be unanimity so I cannot -

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, we will give him leave.

MR. F. ROWE: This is of great importance to Labrador, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on tomorrow I will ask leave to introduce a Bill, "An Act Respecting The Newfoundland And Labrador Hydro Electric Corporation."

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, before we proceed with something new like the Redistribution Motion, may I ask leave under Standing Order 23, I think it is - if the gentleman who pages for us could page over here, I would give him a page for Your Honour. Mr. Speaker, I ask leave under Standing Order 23 to move the adjournment of the House to debate a matter of urgent public importance; namely, the government's refusal to implement the principle that a citizen's financial contribution towards meeting the costs of providing and maintaining the Newfoundland School System, should be directly related to his ability to pay, such refusal being evidenced by the government's continued encouragement of the imposition of school taxes throughout the province.

MR. SPEAKER: While the matter of financing of education in this province has been of considerable debate and controversy recently, I feel that it does not warrant the adjournment of the legislature at this time to debate that particular topic.

MR. ROBERTS: Your Honour, may we - I do not want to go through a formal division to appeal your ruling but may we appeal your ruling?

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the Speaker's ruling be sustained. Those in favour "Aye". Those against "Nay". In my opinion, the "Ayes" have it.

Motion (1), the Redistribution Motion, I think, was adjourned last day by the honourable member for Labrador South.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I shall be brief to this. The amendment to which we are now addressing ourselves would throw

out that infamous resolution introduced by the honourable the Premier, taking away from Labrador the fair and equitable representation which the Premier himself said that we would get and which we deserve and which we demand. I am not sure at this stage that I am doing the right thing. Since I cannot support the original resolution as it stands, it might appear to be inconsistent if I would now support an amendment to that resolution. However, I will restate my request that the government delay the passage of this resolution, correct the census in Labrador and bring in an amendment to the resolution based upon the results of that census.

I have already requested that. I will restate that now and having restated that condition I must express my doubts that the government will not do this. In the anticipation of a rejection of this request then I must state my support of the amendment to the resolution. I would refer honourable members to the speech made yesterday to this House by the honourable the Member for Labrador North to those members who were not in the House at the time and to those who are here and not listening, I heartily recommend that they get ahold of the copy of the verbatim report and acquaint themselves with the points that the honourable member made regarding the reasons why we must not allow the boundaries in Labrador to stand as this resolution would have them. I will not bother to go into all the details. In the interest of brevity I will refer anyone who is interested and I recommend that every honourable member who intends to vote on this resolution to take a look at that speech. There were some very, very good points in it.

I am still asking that the figures be corrected in the Labrador census. If the government were to do this then we would see, as the honourable member for Labrador North has all ready pointed out, that we in Labrador are legally entitled to four full seats. We are not asking for any special considerations. We are not asking for anything out of the ordinary. We are quite content with the quotient laid down and given to the commission. All we are saying is that if the census figures are corrected it will be seen that we are entitled to four full seats. That will eliminate most of the objections which we have regarding the Labrador section.

Now, Mr. Speaker, having observed the intensity of feeling which this thing has generated in the Straits of Bell Isle on both sides of the Straits, I would hesitate to bring it in to public debate because I might be accused of making inflammatory statements. I will therefore try to contain myself and not become emotional about this but there is a dangerous situation developing. Previously we had heard only from the people on the Labrador side of the Straits of Bell Isle in their dissatisfaction with the way the population was distributed in that proposed district. I might point out that a number of people from the Newfoundland side of the Straits have also

expressed their dissatisfaction knowing that with the disparity in numbers any member from whatever party who attempts to provide just, fair and equitable representation in that district, if he attempts to provide just and fair and equitable representation then he must spend an inordinate amount of time on the Labrador side because of special problems, because of weather, because of difficulties in travelling and all the rest. The time that he spends on the Labrador side of the Straits is going to be taken away from the time that he can spend in the Newfoundland side, the Newfoundland part of the district. I could go on at length on that but I will restrain myself.

We now have a pitiful spectacle of citizens in one part of this Province being antagonistic against their fellow citizens in the other part of the Province through no fault of those people on the Northern tip of the Northern Peninsula. It is strictly because of the indifference, I might even say stupidity of the people who drew up that map. Nevertheless, their antagonism is being directed towards those people who they can see immediately, those people who are on their doorsteps and that is not fair. It is not fair now to turn it around and to generate it in the other direction. It is a dishonourable and dishonest and grossly stupid thing for anybody to do. History

is going to record how honourable members of this Assembly deal with this problem. We are at a position now where we can nip it in the bud before it becomes a greater problem. It can be done very simply by taking this resolution and amending it. It is possible to do it under the rules of the House without anybody losing face, I do not want to get into the game of playing partisan politics in this House of Assembly.

I was happy to see the honourable Member for Trinity North when he spoke the other day reinforce my point that when people in two different areas who have already an antagonistic attitude towards each other whether it be called regional jealousies or community antagonisms or whatever you want to call it. When people in two different areas are placed together in one district the honourable member confirmed what I have said before that this will only further aggravate the situation. Anybody who has tried to deal with that situation will know the truth of what we were saying. I appeal to the members of this House, Mr. Speaker, to please put a bit of reason and a bit of sense into this thing before it goes any further.

To sum it up, there is really no point to go any further into it, we have made our case. The resolution must not pass as it is. I do not totally agree with either the commission's report nor the resolution but if we are going to have one or the other then I will opt for the report of the commission unaffected by this resolution. I support this amendment.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): The Member for Hermitage.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am not particularly happy with the amendment as we have it now, the amendment moved by the Member for Twillingate. I would have much preferred to have seen the original amendment moved by the Member for Bonavista North. I would have liked to see it debated and seen it accepted for that matter because that amendment did provide for two concerns that I have and, I believe, other members

on this side have, first of all, that there be no increase in the number of seats presently in this House; and secondly, that any redistribution be done by an independent commission. Unfortunately that first amendment got ruled out of order, and so we are stuck, if you like, with the second amendment.

In that sense, the Member for St. John's North speaking in the debate a day or so ago was right, I guess, in referring to this amendment as an exercise in procedural gymnastics. It is that but with a purpose. On this side of the side, we wanted in the first amendment to achieve two things; to ensure that there would be no increase in the number of seats, and to ensure that any redistribution would be brought about by an independent commission.

We could not have both. That amendment was ruled out of order. So we come to this amendment which at least represents half a loaf, and half a loaf is better than none. We still stand where we stood earlier on the matter of the increase in the number of seats. I shall have something to say to that matter, to that question when we get back on the main motion.

For the present let me address myself to the amendment. The amendment in effect would make the report of the electoral boundaries commission, the recommendations in that report the new distribution of seats. We are not as the honourable Member

for Labrador South said a moment ago, we are not completely happy with the commission report. I am sure that if you assigned any group of four or five people the responsibility, that group would do it somewhat differently than another group, somewhat differently than the commission did it. So, we are never going to get to the point where the commission report is completely acceptable to all concerned. I think at this point, Mr. Speaker, we are reduced to choosing perhaps in some respects the lesser of evils. I would suggest that the commission recommendations are by far the lesser of two evils if the other evil is the proposal brought in by the Premier.

I support the amendment for other reasons, chief of which is the fact that this commission report is a result of a lot of painstaking activity, a lot of investigation.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: They know, they wrote the speeches. You guys do not want to hear it.

Mr. Speaker, I have some strong feelings about redistribution. I think redistribution is needed. I think it has been needed for a long time. I also have some strong feelings about how redistribution ought to be brought about. I think there is a need to correct the present imbalance, an imbalance brought about about partly by some gerrymandering in the past, partly by the failure to set up such commissions as the Higgins Commission, if I might call it such and an imbalance brought about partly by the relocation of population, the movement of population to the more urban areas causing the kind of imbalance that the member for St. John's North talked about where he represents 22,000 electors compared to a couple of thousand in another district in Labrador. That kind of imbalance needs to be corrected.

I believe my colleagues who were in the House a year or so ago - I was not as you know - in March, 1973 when the electoral boundaries delimitation legislation was introduced, I believe my colleagues supported it in part because the legislation provided for the establishment on a regular basis every ten years, the establishment of independent commissions,

independent of this House, a commission which would come up with the redistribution taking into account the factors set forth in the legislation.

Now, after that commission has done its work, travelled around the country, listened to dozens upon dozens of representations in all parts of the province, presented an interim report and then an updated report, now we are told that the commission did not do such a good job after all. You see, Mr. Speaker, it is one thing to be concerned about the present imbalance but if we are to replace it with another imbalance, just as iniquitous as the one that we have right now, I see no purpose in taking the time of the House to process this legislation.

We have heard a fair amount and we will hear some more if other members on the government side choose to speak; we have heard a fair amount about the practice of the past. I am familiar with the practice of the past and I join with a number of the government members who found something lacking in the practice of the past. That is why my colleagues in the House at the time, a year or so ago, took such encouragement from the legislation which was being proposed, legislation which would put this entire procedure in the hands of an independent commission.

It is too bad that legislation was not allowed to serve its purpose. The purpose was stated pretty clearly by the Minister of Justice in introducing the legislation. I think it has been read from a number of times so I shall save him the pain except to document one particular point.

MR. HICKMAN: Why not every day get up and move it as taken as read?

MR. SIMMONS: Taken as read - the Minister of Justice would like that because I believe the more -

MR. HICKMAN: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: Okay I needed a break. I needed a break "Alec" boy.

We have read it. My colleagues have read it.

I will not pain him anymore. He has such a special place in my heart, I would not put him through any undue torture over there. I have a feeling, Mr. Speaker, when the Premier or whoever it was came up with this scheme as contained in the unamended resolution, when that was proposed in Cabinet or wherever, the Minister of Justice may well have forgotten his rationale of a year and a half ago. So I think it has been good that he has had it read back to him a few times. As I promised I shall save him the pain except to refer very briefly to one sentence which is particularly choice. What I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, is whether the Minister of Justice was indeed speaking for the government a year and a half ago or was he just spouting off at the mouth, was he just saying what was his own private, personal opinion on the subject of the need for such legislation. He was introducing the bill as you recall at that time and one can only assume unless he states otherwise that he, a minister of the Crown, introducing a government bill was speaking for the government.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, it comes as such a surprise when the Premier gets up a year and a half later and states a position with reference to the proposed redistribution, a position which is completely at variance with what the Minister of Justice has talked about a year and a half ago. A year and a half ago we hear the Minister of Justice stating without qualification that we are determined once and for all to do away with any suggestion that there be gerrymandering insofar as electoral boundaries are concerned and voting patterns in this Province of Newfoundland. "We are determined," he says, "to do away with not only gerrymandering but even any suggestion that there be gerrymandering." I wonder how he feels now.

MR. HICKMAN: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: He said that.

MR. HICKMAN: Are you still talking about me?

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, still talking about you, favourite subject.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: He will get his name in the paper in even larger print if he stands up and tells us a year and a half later, Mr. Speaker, that he still believes what he believed a year and a half ago.

MR. J.B. ROWE: Political split personality.

MR. MURPHY: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: I can tell the Minister of Social Services more than five were worried. I know thirty-two on the other side of the House are worried, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MURPHY: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: There is lots of time "Ank", lots of time.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! Order, please! Honourable members to my left appear to be engaging or wanting to engage in a debate. They do not have the floor. Indeed one of our more venerable members seems to be the prime offender. The honourable member has the right to be heard in silence.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not realize I had such a fan in the Minister of Social Services. I would not want to bring him any harm but if he keeps it up I will get my band after him.

MR. MURPHY: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: One of the things, Mr. Speaker, I would like for the Minister of Justice to do when he speaks in the debate and I certainly hope he will, is clarify his position now. Has he changed his mind of a year and a half ago or does he still stand by the principles that he had a year and a half ago and so well stated and so well recorded in the verbatim report.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that my colleagues who sat here at that time a year and a half ago when the legislation was being introduced by the Minister of Justice and being debated, I believe my colleagues were badly led down the garden path. I believe they were told something that the government either had no intention of abiding by or that they were on some kind of an exercise whereby the government said, "Look, let us give this thing a try. Let us farm it out to an independent commission and there is a fifty-fifty chance that what the commission comes up with will be satisfactory for our purposes. There is also a fifty-fifty chance that that will not be the case. If it is the case we will accept it. If it is not the case we will go in the House and bluff it,

brazen it through. It is obvious that the Premier has had to take a second course of action. He has had to brazen it through. He cannot say that he is getting much support from his colleagues in doing so. A couple of them have gotten up and made halfhearted speeches basically about their own district and their own area. I have yet to hear, with one exception, the exception of the member for St. John's North, I have yet to hear any speaker from the government side address himself to the whole question of the need to redistribute the seats on the basis of the legislation that was passed a year and a half ago.

Every speaker, save the member from St. John's North, has gotten up, dragged in a red herring or two, talked about his own district and how happy or unhappy he is and then sat down. It stands to reason, Mr. Speaker, that if you are going to redistribute the seats in the House of Assembly, that just about every member is going to be affected favourably or otherwise depending on his vantage point in many cases.

My own district is going to be split in half if you like and part of it will go into Burgeo, Bay d'Espoir and part of it will go into Fortune, Hermitage. I have no particular comments on that. I would be honoured and delighted to represent either of the new districts and look forward to the day that I shall.

MR. ROBERTS: It is too bad that you cannot run them both.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, that is a possibility. I might look into that but we are going to have such a raft of candidates coming forward that I will be lucky to get the nomination in one, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MURPHY: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: That will be the kiss of death.

MR. SIMMONS: The kiss of death.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please!

Certainly it is out of order for honourable members to speak when they do not have the floor and speak from their places is certainly -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about at the door with a coffee cup?

MR. SPEAKER (MR. STAGG): Well, this is what I want to bring to honourable

members' attention. Honourable members poking their heads in through the door and having a few comments and then ducking out is certainly not looked upon with favour by the Chair and certainly with extreme disfavour.

MR. SIMMONS: I was saying my colleagues were led down the garden path a year and a half ago. Also, I believe the people of Newfoundland were led down the garden path on this one. I was not a member of the House but I was a member of the general public and I took some encouragement from the announcement from government that there was going to be the establishment of an independent commission to do this job. That is the way it should be done. There is a good tradition for it in other parts of the world, in other parliamentary democracies.

I was glad that at last someone had the wisdom to introduce this kind of legislation here in Newfoundland. Now, of course, a year and a half later we see a complete mockery being made of the legislation and it is just as well it was not on the books at all.

I believe it was the member for Bonavista South in his speech in this debate referred to a part of the legislation and quoted that part which said the legislature could approve with alterations. He went on to suggest, I think, that somehow this was an excuse for what the Premier had introduced. Well, it is certainly understandable, Mr. Speaker, that any legislation of this sort can be altered or that any commission report is subject to some refinements or alterations by the legislating body, by the House of Assembly.

Is he suggesting that that phrase in the legislation means that the government from the beginning intended to throw the whole thing out the window and come up with a redistribution among themselves? We would tolerate name changes. We would tolerate some oversight of the commission and we would tolerate the wisdom of government in correcting that oversight. But, Mr. Speaker, that is not what we are talking about here. We are not talking about alterations. We are talking about a completely different redistribution. We are talking about pieces of the first commission report and the second commission report and then bits and pieces which do not appear in any commission report.

Indeed of the fifty-one proposed districts, thirty-one of them have been altered since the commission presented its final report. Over half the districts in the proposal presented in the resolution are different from and many of them substantially different from the recommendations of the commission report.

That is not alteration, that is a new ball game, that is a new set of proposals altogether, alterations, yes, Mr. Speaker, but not licence to bring in a completely new proposal and I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the resolution as proposed by the Premier is a completely new set of proposals, proposals which are not at all in the spirit of the legislation of a year and a half ago, proposals which in effect are an insult to the members of the commission for their hard work.

We are not protesting redistribution, Mr. Speaker, we are protesting the gerrymandering. Now you can call it what you will, gerrymandering, tinkering, cloak it in any terms you want, this resolution changing as it does over half of the commission's proposals is nothing short of gerrymandering. What is most unfortunate about this kind of thing, Mr. Speaker, is that the people directly involved, the members and perhaps in some cases, future members of the House of Assembly, these people are so close to the situation that they are the very last people, we are the very last people, we should be sitting down with pencil and paper and carving out districts. Therein lies another good reason for the setting up of the electoral boundaries commission because it is understood that no matter how pure your motives, if you are living too close to a situation, if you have a vested interest in a situation, what very often happens is that even unconsciously, no matter how pure your motive, no matter how cautious you are, you begin to write into the legislation, you begin to introduce into the decision you are trying to make, your own preferences, your own concerns.

I believe it is a long standing tradition, Mr. Speaker, that at a Board of Directors meeting, at a school board meeting, almost anywhere where someone has a particular vested interest in the matter at hand that he not participate in the decision. Yet we have a situation before us now where somebody or three or four or five or six or whoever sat down and took the commission report and carved it up to their liking. Mr. Speaker, I may be wrong in saying that. I hope I am but I wish somebody on the government side would get up and tell us how it was done. If the commission report came

in and the government members in their wisdom saw that there were a lot of inequities in it and then farmed it out to somebody not directly involved, I would buy that if they could document it, I would buy it. The obvious procedure would have been for them to come in and get new terms of reference for the commission and send it back to work again. But I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that is what was done. I thought first that the Tory caucus had a pretty free hand in it but I understand from what the Member for St. John's North said that at least one member of the Tory caucus had no part in it.

MR. NEARY: Only the three musketeers, Barry, Doody, and Moores.

MR. SIMMONS: So perhaps it was a small few who did this thing whether in the dark of night as the Member for Bonavista North suggested, I do not know. Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make right here is that because of this long standing tradition in business and in public affairs generally that if you have a vested interest you do not allow yourself to get involved in the decision at hand. Because of that clearly established precedent alone government has done something here that is very inadvisable to say the least. I certainly appeal to the members in government to look at it in this light. To say it another way, not only must justice be done, it must appear to be done. However pure the motive, however conscientious the members in Cabinet were on this matter, the fact is they have left a smell, Mr. Speaker, they have left the impression, a clear impression that they carved this thing up to their own liking. Why do they walk into that one, Mr. Speaker? They had the legislation for which they were hailed a year and a half ago, legislation which showed they as a group of people that were prepared to allow an independent and informed commission to do the job for them. Sure we can have second thoughts. None of us are perfect. Perhaps the legislation was lacking in some respects. Perhaps the terms of reference for the commission were not clearly enough defined. Perhaps the members of Cabinet after seeing the first and second report said, "Ah! They forget this. The commission forgot this. They did not take this into account." That is fair ball. The commission could only do its job in light of

the terms of reference that were laid down in the legislation and if in afterthought members of cabinet had discovered that the terms of reference had not been specific enough to protect communities of interest or whatever other concerns that were not delineated sufficiently in the legislation. It was a simple matter for that government to bring in some amended terms of reference and send the commission back and let it do its job.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, however pure, however above board the motives of individual cabinet members may have been in participating in this exercise, of carving up the districts without reference to the commission's report, however pure, however above board the suspicion is there. The suspicion is there that they have indulged in an exercise which can improve their own situation. I have some thoughts on whether it will. I happen to believe among other things that the voting patterns have altered drastically. So I am not particularly against the resolution for partisan political reasons in terms of what the outcome might be in another election but I am against the set of circumstances which put this House a year and a-half ago through the whole exercise of legislation that would provide for this job being done quite independently. And for that set of circumstances which brings us here now and in effect by this resolution negates everything that the legislation of a year and a-half ago did with its expense, with the cost of the commission, its travels and all the other related costs. Now after all that exercise we are told by government, in effect, that we were wrong from the beginning. We made a stupid move back there. We appointed the late and distinguished Judge Higgins, we appointed Magistrate Seabright who knows the province pretty well, having served in a number of parts of the province, appointed Mr. Webber and Mr. Summers, both fairly well acquainted with the province. We set them on a task which involved hearings and investigations of various sorts, now a year and a-half later we were wrong. That is what the government, in effect, are saying, Mr. Speaker, we were wrong. We did the wrong thing after all

the work they did, all the study, all the travel, all the hearings, the government are saying, after all of that we in government with all our other responsibilities are more wise than that commission. We are the boys who really know what the districts of the province should be like, so give us a pencil and we will show you. That is what government have done, Mr. Speaker, with this resolution.

I would buy it, Mr. Speaker, if there were a change or two but thirty-one districts, thirty-one out of the fifty-one proposed districts are different than what the commission after its long and hard work have recommended to this House.

So the word must go out now, Mr. Speaker, that so far as the government are concerned the commission did a lousy job. The commission for all of the eminence of its members and the expense of its efforts and the lengthy and painstaking activity of its undertaking, for all of that, the commission, in the government's opinion, did a lousy job. Not a report that just had to be amended here and there along the way but a report that had to be essentially thrown out after all they did and redone by three, four or five people.

I heard the Member for St. John's North say a day or so ago that three or four people are not wise enough to draw up boundaries. Well that is something that he should have realized a year and a-half ago of course, because this House sitting here delegated that very job to three or four people. If I were him I would sound around, I would sound around my own

common room and I would find out who came up with this doctored version, who came up with the basis for the resolution that the Premier has presented. I think, as my colleague, the Member for Bell Island has suggested he will find out there were three or four. Not the three or four members of the commission, Mr. Speaker, but three or four members of cabinet.

The Member for St. John's North, while I am on the subject of him, also rejected the charge of gerrymandering. I do not know how he reconciles that with what he said on television last night. If I heard him correctly, he said last night that he was not very happy with either proposal but he would much rather favour the "Higgins proposal" as he called it than he would the government proposal. That flies in the face of what he said in the House a day or so ago.

More important, Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. John's North who is to be more pitied than blamed, was trying to stake out for himself a bit of territory, I guess. He had taken a courageous step in stating his position with reference to the resolution and the amendment and I guess in trying to cover his tracks a bit, trying to buy a little favour, he had to find something in the government position to agree with. I am sure he found it difficult in this gerrymandered proposal but he did it. I say he is to be more pitied than blamed.

He is also to be admired for his stand on the number of seats and I shall have something to say about that, I hope, when we get on to the debate in the main motion.

One of the members on the government side, I believe the Member for Trinity North, suggested that the commission does not have the right to dictate what goes into legislation. Of course on that he is perfectly correct. The government and in turn the House of Assembly decide what kind of things get into legislation so I have no quarrel with him on that point at all.

While the commission had no right to dictate it did have a responsibility to carry out its mandate, to carry out its commission,

the commission being to redistribute the electoral boundaries. That it did and I say, did well. If then the prior legislation of a year and a-half ago had given that authority, that responsibility, they cannot argue with the commission if they went about and performed that responsibility, if they carried out that commission.

You particularly cannot argue with them if the commission like all Newfoundlanders, the commission members like all Newfoundlanders and like other members of this House heard government spokesmen such as the Minister of Justice giving notice, giving notice that they intended to abide by the results of the commission's findings. Again I shall spare the Minister of Justice the pain but he knows full well where it is all recorded in the verbatim report. At one point he is quoted as saying that it would be nothing short of shocking for a government to attempt to change anything in the commission's report.

I would love to know where he stands now, Mr. Speaker, and I am looking forward to hearing. I certainly hope that he in view of his prominent role

in the debate when the legislation was introduced will at least tell us where he stands on the matter right now.

Mr. Speaker, the more I look at this government proposal, this resolution, introduced by the Premier, the more I am convinced it is very wrong. It certainly ignores the special needs of the rural areas.

The Premier stands in his place and he talks about community of interest, he talks about the geographic considerations, the rural situation, sparsity of population, density of population - I say he talked about it - in all fairness he tried. He did not do much of a job. Indeed, as a Newfoundlander, I was shocked to realize that he had such a poor grasp of the province's geography but that is another matter. His proposal does ignore the very provisions laid down in the legislation.

In the legislation section (17) and I quote: "The commission made, apart from the strict application of the earlier paragraphs, in any case where special geographic considerations including in particular the sparsity, density or relative rate of growth of population of a region of the province, the accessibility of a region or the size or shape thereof, appear to the commission to render such a departure necessary or desirable."

The commission, Mr. Speaker, was specifically instructed to take into account the particular needs of the sparsely populated parts of this province, and those parts of the province where there would be special geographic considerations. Now, Mr. Speaker, compare that instruction with some of the provisions of the Premier's proposal.

Despite all his arguments about community of interest and about growth areas, geographic considerations, where do we find the largest district in terms of population in his proposal? Baie Verte-White Bay, over 12,000 people. The Straits of Belle Isle, that district which will incorporate part of the island and part of the Labrador mainland, perhaps the most difficult district of the whole set of fifty-one in the Premier's proposal. Yet that district, the

Strait of Belle Isle has 11,600 people. I could go on but I believe my -

MR. NEARY: Harbour Main-Bell Island 12,030.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, my colleague from Bell Island draws my attention to Harbour Main with over 12,000. I could have mentioned for you a number of others which are well above the average of, I believe, 10,200. My colleague has gone into this, Mr. Speaker, in some detail so I will not bother to repeat what they have said. I believe the point is adequately made that the Premier's arguments about community of interest and about sparsity of population and geographic considerations, his arguments just do not hold water, Mr. Speaker. At least his resolution does not bear out his argument. His resolution flies in the face of things that he said in his speech a week ago. It certainly flies in the face of the legislation of a year and a-half ago.

We find that those areas which are most difficult to service as a member of the House are the areas that are being given the greatest population. Areas like Grand Falls, for instance, Mr. Speaker, one single town comprises the whole district, that particular community (if I can find it here) has 8,000 people. One of the smallest, the fourth smallest district in the whole province, certainly not a geographic obstacle, certainly not difficult of access in any time of the winter, certainly not hard to get to. Grand falls right in the central part of the province with the best of road and air connections and yet, it has 8,000 people. The more difficult districts geographically have 12,000 or 12,000 plus.

Gander is another example: Another small

District, comprising, I believe, of Gander, Glenwood and Benton. It cannot be considered, Mr. Speaker, a difficult district by any stretch of the imagination.

Mr. Speaker, I believe all I am saying was said a year and a half ago. I was not here but I read the verbatim report. It was said and it was for these reasons, Mr. Speaker, the legislation was set up. Here is really the point of this whole debate. If the government had allowed that legislation to take its course; had allowed the commission to do its job; had accepted the findings of the commission and its recommendations; (Barring a refinement or a touching up here and there.) if the government had brought the findings of the commission; if the government had allowed the commission to do what it was set up to do; allowed the legislation to do what it set out to do; we would not need this debate right now.

Mr. Speaker, in listening to the speakers from the other side, I referred to one or two of them, I just want to refer to one other, my friend the Member for Placentia West, the Minister of Mines and Energy. He made the case basically on the matter of more districts, the justification for fifty-one. I will come back to that when we get back to the main motion. He did make the point that more M.H.A.'s under this redistribution would mean improved contact. It is that kind of argument, Mr. Speaker, that makes this debate very difficult to take part in because it does not take into account what the proposal of the Premier is saying. While the Minister of Mines and Energy talked about increased, improved contact because of more districts, what he either fails to realize or will not realize is that under this butcher job that their Premier has brought in, there are districts which are even larger than they are right now. St. Barbe for instance.

Will the Minister of Mines and Energy suggest that there is any district now which is more difficult of access than that Eagle River seat, the entire Coast of Labrador and Southern Labrador in one seat? Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, as I look at this resolution and the map, I wonder if the Premier is not just putting us on, putting us through some kind of an exercise. It is some kind of a bad joke in a way, Mr. Speaker. It has to be. For the Premier to honestly suggest that the Strait of Belle Isle, as constituted in this resolution, should be a seat or the Labrador Coast seat should be a seat. It is a bad joke, Mr. Speaker. I hope he will get to the point very soon and bring in the real resolution.

I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to ask before I sit down, I would like to know where the government members individually stand on this matter? We have heard from very few of them. Only one of them, the Member for St. John's North, had the courage to state where he stands in terms of the redistribution - only one.

MR. NEARY: What about old wishy-washy from St. John's South.

MR. SIMMONS: Only the Member for St. John's North has said where he stands on this redistribution. The Member for Bonavista South has given us some pretty good geography lessons that relate to the Bonavista Peninsula. The Member for Trinity North gave us his feelings as they relate to his own neck of the woods. That is fair ball, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Placentia West did likewise insofar as it relates to the Placentia West Area. All of them ducked the essential question of the redistribution. The essential question of whether we ought to be in this House undoing the report of the Higgin's¹ Commission or to put it a little more kindly, Mr. Speaker, not one of these speakers gave us any kind of rationale, any kind of reason at all why the Premier's proposal as contained in the

resolution is an improvement on the Higgins Report or to put it one other way, not one of them gave us a reason why they felt or how they could justify the obvious charge in the resolution that the late Judge Higgins and his people fell down on the job. The resolution can only mean that, Mr. Speaker, that the late Judge Higgins and his people fell down on the job that was given them, and the government had to take it in hand and do it all by itself.

What I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, is where the individual members on the government side stand, not on their own district. I can give you views for hours on whether Burgeo and Ramea should be with Bay d'Espoir or whether St. Bernard's in Fortune Bay should be tied in with Seal Cove and Hermitage and Gaultois over in Hermitage Bay. I can give you views on that.

This is not a case. The name of the game here, Mr. Speaker, is not or should not be where members carve up their districts like they would like to have them. Boy if I could do that, Mr. Speaker, I would have the best district in the whole province. That is not the issue. I will invite government members first of all to speak.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: I think it is worth noting, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Bonavista South is still asking what the issue is.

MR. MORGAN: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: He is back, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, first of all I would invite the government members to speak. I believe it is the member for St. John's South who suggested that they should all be heard on this matter. I hope they follow the suggestion, that they all do speak to tell us where they stand, not how they made out in the butcher job, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to know whether the member for Placentia West is happy or unhappy about the new Burin Peninsula, Placentia West District because if he is not happy with it, I dare say the Tories will find somebody else who can run down there. I am not concerned about where the individual members sit in terms of their own balliwack, whether they have a plumb or got shafted.

MR. MORGAN: How many seats do you want, forty-one or forty-two or fifty-one?

MR. SIMMONS: If the member for Bonavista South were in the House earlier Mr. Speaker, he would have heard me say that I shall address myself to the number of seats later. It is not proper for me to do so now because we are discussing the number of seats. We are discussing whether or not the commission report should be accepted with or without alterations.

I am not concerned, Mr. Speaker, about how individual members came off, fared after the fellows on the government side whoever they were, did the butcher job on the Higgins report. I am not concerned about hearing that. I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, about hearing how they reconciled what is being done in the Premier's motion with the legislation that they all stood behind a year and a half ago.

Mr. Speaker, the member for St. John's South said that all the members should speak in this. So, I fully expect he will speak. Unfortunately he is not here right now but I certainly invite him to stand and tell us, first of all, whether he is for increasing the number of seats at this particular time and secondly, whether he subscribed to this method of doing it, whether he is in favour of a group of people in government, two, three, four or five - we do not know how many - taking the commission report and carving it up to their own liking. What does the member for St. John's South feel on that subject?

I would like to know what the Minister of Justice feels about this matter now and how he reconciles his words of a year and a half ago with the Premier's resolution. Does the Minister of Justice stand by the resolution now? Has he changed his mind? Has he had some thoughts about the justification for independent boundary commissions?

MR. MARSHALL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, if I may. I am not sure whether it is unnecessary repetition. I think it is but the honourable member has successfully for about almost forty-five minutes now repeated forty-five times what he said in the first minute he spoke. I am just wondering because of this, as to whether his time has expired or not. I think it is very close.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, that is not a point of order, Sir, and I would suggest to Your Honour that all the Minister without Portfolio is trying to do is to kill some time. My honourable colleague is petting to the government members and I would suggest, Your Honour, that you lay down the law as far as members on the other side getting up making silly, foolish points of order. All it is doing is using up the time of my honourable colleague.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, surely it is a matter of point of order to get up and ask whether the honourable member's time has expired. Because, he is out of order if his time has expired. He is out of order because of unnecessary repetition as well, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! The point raised by the honourable Minister without Portfolio I do not consider to be a point of order. If he is asking a question, I will inform him as I was about to inform the honourable Member for Hermitage, that he has three minutes left.

AN HON. MEMBER: Knocked down again, "Bill".

MR. SIMMONS: I would like to know also, Mr. Speaker, where the Member for Labrador West stands on this issue? Unfortunately he is not in the House but I hope he is within the hearing of my voice, because certainly this butcher job as the Premier introduced it, has a lot of implications, unfortunate implications for Labrador, and again flies in the face of the legislation which provided a special place and rightly so for Labrador in this new redistribution. The Premier's resolution does not take into account and I would certainly like to know whether the Member for Labrador West is going to sit idly by and silently vote for this particular resolution or is going to support our amendment which at least restores the place for Labrador as provided for in the original legislation.

How about, Mr. Speaker, some of the other fellows who have been spouting off for years about conflict of interest? The Member for St. John's West is a good example. I could come back to the Member for Burin. Do they not think that there is some conflict of

interest involved here in having the people who will be the members of the House of Assembly, possibly, carve up their own districts to their liking?

The Member for St. John's North, Mr. Speaker, has led the way for which we salute him. I do hope that his colleagues will have the courage that he has displayed and will stand in their places and tell us how they feel about this legislation. I appeal, Mr. Speaker, to the government to either support this amendment which will have the effect of introducing the redistribution on the basis of an independent commission report or if they find they are unable to do that, to introduce our first amendment and allow a new redistribution to be gone into on the basis of forty-two seats. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Are we ready for the amendment?

MR. SIMMONS: Are they not going to speak over there at all?

MR. NEARY: Are they all gagged on the other side, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. P. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the amendment to the resolution now before this honourable House. The amendment to the resolution -

MR. SIMMONS: Saw it clearly for them "Paul", real clear.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, it surprises me to no end to find that so many government members are staying very quiet, not only on this amendment to the resolution but to the resolution itself. Only about three or four of them so far have found it necessary to rise to their feet in this honourable House and let the people of Newfoundland know how they feel pertaining to this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, in supporting the amendment to this resolution I do so wholeheartedly, because I would suspect that possibly about ninety-nine point ninety-nine per cent of the people of Newfoundland feel that it is unnecessary at this time to increase the number of seats of this honourable House. It certainly does not do anything to check inflation in this province. As a matter of fact, it is going to do something to increase inflation. It is going to cost the people of this province -

MR. MARSHALL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Your Honour has ruled on this before. This amendment is an amendment to establish fifty-one seats based on the commission report rather than accept the resolution to accept the commission's report with the amendments that were presented in the schedule.

What the honourable member is now doing is debating whether there should be fifty-one seats and that is not relevant

to this particular amendment and has been ruled out of order by Your Honour before on the debate and the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Honourable members are aware that when there is an amendment they should be very relevant to the amendment itself. I feel that the honourable member was straying somewhat from the amendment.

MR. THOMS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I trust that Your Honour will allow me the same latitude that is allowed other members of this honourable House especially on this debate because we have definitely gone far afield.

At the present time, Mr. Speaker, our people feel that only forty-one or forty-three seats are necessary.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I rise again on a point of order. I do not know whether the honourable member for Bonavista North has understood Your Honour's ruling but Your Honour's ruling has been that on this amendment it is not germane to the discussion whether we have any less than fifty-one seats. Fifty-one seats are established as the number of seats and the amendment addresses itself to dividing Newfoundland into fifty-one seats by adopting the commission's report rather than the motion that was put forth by the government. So, consequently the honourable member is obviously out of order when he is discussing less than fifty-one seats or more.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, to that point of order, Sir. I would submit Mr. Speaker, that my colleague is completely in order. My colleague is relevant to the amendment. He was merely making a point and he was expressing a view that the people of the province did not want fifty-one seats. My colleague, Mr. Speaker, is not saying that he necessarily agrees with the people. He is merely saying that the people do not want fifty-one members in the House of Assembly. My colleague is merely trying to make a point and he should be given an opportunity, Sir, to finish his statement, to finish the paragraph he started before he was so rudely interrupted by the Minister without Portfolio. Sir, I would suggest that he get back on his lily pad.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, you have already made that ruling and the

honourable member is flaunting. Not really, he is not flaunting because I do not think he is intending to but the point of the matter is that Your Honour has made the ruling and as soon as Your Honour made the ruling, whether the honourable member heard it or not, I do not know - he went back on the same tack.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No, he certainly did not.

MR. MARSHALL: He certainly did.

MR. THOMS: Further to that point of order. I believe the Minister without Portfolio is trying to throw into this debate some unnecessary points and he is trying to just get on his feet and to interrupt the speakers of the honourable House and to use up the time of the various speakers. This is his tactic. This is what he has been doing all through, not only this debate to the amendment, but to the debate to the resolution. I would ask Your Honour to rule that there is no point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I am sure honourable members are aware that members to my left and to my right, when they rise to speak on points of order, are also taking up the time of the House. The honourable member for Bonavista North was not being relevant to the amendment. I shall let him continue but I do not want to have to bring it to his attention again.

MR. THOMS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, the amendment asks that this honourable House delete and replace - and further that the schedule be deleted and replaced with the electoral district boundaries as set forth in the final report of the Newfoundland Electoral District Boundaries Commission. Now, Mr. Speaker, I agree with this.

The government in the spring of 1972, after they had received a huge majority from the electorate of this province, brought forth in their Throne Speech - I would like to read what the Throne Speech of April, 1972, read, Mr. Speaker.

"It is the intention of my government to establish an independent commission whose responsibility will be to examine closely the present system, made through a representation to the honourable House. Population shifts as well as improvements in transportation and communications facilities

may have resulted in certain inequities in our present electoral boundaries. This permanent commission will report at regular intervals to the government and will make recommendations consistent with a just and equitable system of representation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the Throne Speech was read, we, on this side of the House, took particular notice of what the Throne Speech told us about the government's intention of setting up an independent, permanent commission. Such intentions at the time we thought were honourable. Such a move was definitely for the good of the political life of Newfoundland. Mr. Speaker, we would agree with that intention wholeheartedly. This intention, Mr. Speaker, was backed up by the words of the Member for St. Mary's at that time on April 25, when he spoke in this honourable House in his speech on the Address in Reply.

The Member for St. Mary's said: "We wish to put an end to gerrymandering and such an independent commission will put an end to gerrymandering." The member goes on to say: "The only thing that we in the administration can take credit for is that in our first election to office, we, irrevocably, irretrievably, put an end to this kind of political skulduggery."

AN HON. MEMBER: What is that again?

MR. THOMS: By stating in the Speech from the Throne the government's intention and policy to establish an independent commission that is obviously binding on it.

Mr. Speaker, I like those last words, "that is obviously binding on it."

AN HON. MEMBER: Who said it?

MR. THOMS: The now Minister of Education, the Member for St. Mary's. These are noble words, Mr. Speaker, indeed.

MR. NEARY: The former Leader of the Opposition.

MR. THOMS: I only wish that the present administration would have the intestinal fortitude to stand by such words.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. THOMS: And to acknowledge them. Mr. Speaker, I believe that all Newfoundlanders would like to see such an independent and permanent commission set up. I believe also that our people would like to see the government in power accept the reports of this independent commission. Mr. Speaker, whether or not they accept the report, it will not make any difference to the outcome or the result of any election held in the province. You can take Newfoundland and you can cut it up all you like in districts and the result as far as the number of seats are concerned will be the same. Governments do not win by gerrymandering, they lose.

Mr. Speaker, this present government, at the present time, is guilty of the most blatant example of gerrymandering that this province has ever seen. No pencils in the dark of night in the cabinet room will turn the result of the next provincial election. The Tory Government can do exactly what they like. They can cut the province up how they like. The results will be the same a smashing victory for the Liberal Party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. THOMS: Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am quite happy that my friend, my colleague brought forth this amendment. I beg all honourable members on both sides of the House to support this amendment. It will bring some dignity to politics in Newfoundland. We, in this honourable House and especially the government will be more respected by the people of Newfoundland.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that when the government set up this commission that they must have had some intention at the time of accepting the final report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. Somewhere along the line, Mr. Speaker, something went all haywire, either their thinking was changed, they changed their principle, or they threw away their principles or something happened but for some reason or other, Mr. Speaker, this government are not doing, not following the course that they said it would follow. It is not accepting the final report of the commission as the government said it would.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would indeed like to see all members of this honourable House, not only speak on this amendment but also to support this amendment.

MR. NEARY: They will not even attend the sittings of the House. The old conflict of interest just got back for the first time today. He is all gagged.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker,

MR. REID: He should be lucky I am.

MR. THOMS: There are many problems -

MR. NEARY: Do not make me laugh.

MR. THOMS: If you are looking at this honourable House and looking at the members there are many problems which the members themselves have more important than redistribution. I should not say more important than redistribution because I believe it is necessary to change some of the boundaries of some of the districts that now exist in the province but I do not believe that we should switch the number from what we already have. I believe this amendment would take us back to the final commission's report and I believe that the commission's report should be accepted unanimously by this honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, if this government could only pay attention to some of the problems of the backbenchers of the government, some of the problems of the M.H.A.'s on the opposition who need accommodations and need them badly this I believe is one of the most important problems that this government should be facing -

MR. NEARY: We were promised in the Throne Speech of 1972.

MR. THOMS: I remember some time ago the honourable Member for Labrador South, I believe, his office was in the back of his car.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please! I fail to see what the location of the office of the Member for Labrador South has to do with the proposed amendment.

MR. THOMS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with you wholeheartedly I was wandering somewhat. But, Mr. Speaker, if we are to have any recognition of the commission and its report it is very important and vital that this honourable House accept this final report of the commission and I believe accept it unanimously. At least three ministers of government have spoken previously even to this resolution coming into the House stating that such a commission's report would be , one said, binding, others had different words but it all meant the same to say that the commission's report

would be accepted by this government. Therefore -

MR. NEARY: What did the Member for St. John's South say?

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I believe, that this honourable House should vote for this amendment so that we can accept the commission's report. I am sure in doing so we would please many of our Newfoundlanders.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Is the House ready for the question?

All those in favour of the amendment.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Those opposed.

HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): In my opinion, the "Nays" have it.

DIVISION:

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): We must have three members if we are to have a formal division. Call in the members.

Those in favour of the amendment please rise: Mr. Woodward, Mr. Neary, Mr. Thoms, Mr. F. Rowe, Mr. Simmons, Mr. Gillette.

Those opposed please rise; The Hon. Minister of Mines and Energy, the Hon. Minister of Health, the Hon. the Minister of Social Services, the Hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations,

MR. NEARY: That is what you would call courage.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, Please! There is to be no debate during a division.

The Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications, the Hon. Minister of Rehabilitation and Recreation, the Hon. Minister of Education, the Hon. Mr. Marshall, the Hon. Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, the Hon. Minister of Finance, the Hon. Minister of Rural Development, Mr. Aylward, Mr. Wells, Mr. Brett, Mr. Senior, Mr. Carter, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Young, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Howard.

There are six for it. Your Honour and twenty against.

MR. SPEAKER: I declare the amendment defeated.

MR. NEARY: What is the count?

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): The count was twenty against and six in favour.

We will now resume debate on the main motion, I think,
there are two speakers, at least. The Hon. Member for Labrador North.

MR. M. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, while the Hon. Minister of Social

services is organizing his group.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. WOODWARD: Go and get "Al Evans" to do a job for you.

MR. SPEAKER (Stage): Order, please! Order, please! In order that the honourable member gets off on the right foot, it is very essential in these things, I think that if he is to refer to an honourable member, especially an honourable member who is not present, that he is to be referred to by the constituency he represents and certainly not by his given name.

MR. WOODWARD: I appreciate your remarks, and I accept that, Mr. Speaker. To speak on the main motion is to sum up some of my remarks that I made on the amendment. I am sorry to see that the amendment was defeated because I think this would have put us back in at least a position whereby a number of people throughout this Province would have felt that the government would not have been so harsh as to accept the second map or the report of the commission rather than putting forward a proposal with thirty-one changes that is not acceptable to this Province.

I was dealing primarily with the Labrador section, Mr. Speaker, and if I could have the map again I would appreciate it very much to conclude my remarks. I would like to point out the areas that I talked about and I was relating, as the Premier suggested, a community of interest that applies in the different areas. He was referring to areas such as north of Lake Melville and south of Lake Melville and I was speaking on the seat that is now referred to as the Maskaupi or the Eagle River seat.

Mr. Speaker, when I talked of the community of interest that lies between the communities of Happy Valley, Goose Bay and how it relates to the northern portion of Labrador. I cited some thirty odd communities of interest that lie directly within this area. I went on then to explain what is happening here in Goose Bay, Happy Valley and how it indeed relates to the areas, Cartwright South to Mary's Harbour. Now the community of Goose Bay, Happy Valley have had a relationship with the Cartwright people for a number of years. It derived chiefly from people coming into the area and seeking employment and settling in the area. As I mentioned the greatest

flow of traffic from Goose Bay to any coastal community, it flows in the direction towards Cartwright. Now, this in itself in my mind is sufficient to say that Cartwright indeed relates to Happy Valley and indeed relates to Goose Bay. We have set up not a total supply centre in this area but then again there is a number of people trading from Cartwright in the Goose Bay Area. As the honourable Member for Labrador South will agree and no doubt he has a number of relatives around in the Cartwright Area, that this is important to the south. When you go further south into the Port Hope Simpson Area, we now, Sir, have due to Port Hope Simpson having a number of people employed in the logging industry and seeing that the government have not seen fit to develop the logging industry in the Alexis Bay Area or that timber stand, those people have now looked to Goose Bay for employment.

So we have had an influx of people from the Port Hope Simpson Area into Goose Bay and then again in the Fox Harbour Area and the Mary's Harbour Area as well. There are a number of people who have come in to seek employment and this to me relates to community of interest to the Goose Bay, Happy Valley Area. The Premier was very brief when he said that there is a community of interest between the north and the south.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out the community of interest that lies between the communities on the north side of Lake Melville and how they relate to communities on the south side of Lake Melville in the Straits Area. To start we have this year, the only trade that has existed in this particular area was the fact that Labrador services this year at a great expense to the taxpayer decided that they would fly a certain amount of salmon that was caught in the Black Tickle Area, they would fly it in to the processing fish plant in Makkovik. This Area of Makkovik has very little salmon which is primarily char. There is a number of hundreds of pounds of salmon flown into this area. This, Mr. Speaker, -

MR. STAGG: Order please! While I have been following honourable members closely, it would appear to me irrelevant to speak of the retention of salmon in Makkovik and how it relates to the main resolution. If the honourable member can indicate how it is relevant then certainly he may continue.

MR. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, what I am trying to point out, as the Premier in his opening remarks related to the House, the community of interest that lies between the communities on the north side of Lake Melville and how they relate to the communities on the south side of Lake Melville. I have shown the relationship to Goose Bay now I would like to point out if there is any relationship between the north and the south. I say, Mr. Speaker, there is no relationship. I am pointing out, maybe an isolated case, where there are some salmon caught in the south and is processed at a plant in the north. I would like to think that this is in order, Mr. Speaker, as it indeed relates with the opening remarks made by the Premier on the resolution in the House.

Indeed, there is no area or community of interest that lies between those two communities. Why I point this out, Mr. Speaker, we have had numerous correspondence and numerous phone calls in the last few days. I mentioned in my opening remarks that this community going some eight hundred miles from Mary's Harbour through to the Community of Nain, serving some eighteen permanent communities and during the summertime expands into about thirty communities, Mr. Speaker, where you have fishing communities for the summer season.

The total population is in the area of 4,700 people. In all sixteen communities from here.. This area spreads for some eight hundred miles as I stated before, a distance greater than the Trans Canada Highway, from Port aux Basques to St. John's. What I want to point out is that it is physically impossible for one particular member unless he chose to live somewhere in the south, and if he chose to live in the south then his communications have to come out of Goose Bay because this is the direction from which the communications flow. They flow from Goose Bay into Cartwright and then from Cartwright

into this particular area here. It flows from Goose Bay to the north in that direction.

When the recommendations were made in Goose Bay to the royal commission, the remarks of some of the commissioners were great. As the chairman, the late Jimmy Higgins said: we were looking for some way by which we could reduce this seat and divide. We showed them the population figures and they then went along with this recommendation. This recommendation was not made on party lines, Mr. Speaker. I can represent either one of those districts and possibly win the seat. I would be tempted to run.

This coastal area will not receive the justice

that it should be done. I have a letter from a very prominent person, a Labradorian who has spent a number of years and was a parish priest in the Community of Cartwright and came out of the Straits Area. He wrote me a letter, enclosing a copy of a letter that he sent to "The Evening Telegram" protesting the government's move to put through the redistributed boundaries according to the Premier's resolution. He says that I am - I move the adjournment, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Labrador North has moved the adjournment of the debate and will be given the opportunity to continue next day if he so desires.

With regards to the Late Show, I recognize the honourable member for St. John's North.

MR. CARTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am required under the rules to be extremely brief as I will be. The matter of the house for a house legislation, the present situation and this applies in the case of private homes only - only the market value is considered, whatever an equivalent home would fetch on the open market.

Now, in the case of condemned houses - the first chance at public housing - this also applies in urban renewal schemes of which there are three in Newfoundland, Mundy Pond, Shea Heights and Corner Brook. The recommendation of this House last year was that in the case of a person expropriated, the case of a private home expropriated, that the person expropriated would receive the price of another house whatever the price of another house might be.

Now, to give a concrete example very quickly. Supposing a house is expropriated because a highway has to go through, has to have a right of way. Let us say that that house, even the most charitable interpretation puts a price on that house of say \$10,000. Let us suppose that the expropriating officials generously say, "Well, we will give \$15,000." So, they give the person \$15,000 and then that person goes out on the open market and tries to buy a house and at today's inflated prices finds that that \$15,000 is only a downpayment, then that person is saddled with a mortgage. Now, he did not want to move in the first place. He would have been quite prepared to stay on but

because of the way the law reads, a definite injustice occurs.

Now, why I bring this up as a matter of some urgency, I do not believe that there are many cases of many houses about to be expropriated. I would guess that each year there may not be more than half a dozen to a dozen. I do know that a great many people are afraid of being expropriated. They are uncertain of their future. They do not know what way a highway is going to go. They do not know what way streets are going to be rearranged and they are just afraid. I have had a great many people in my district and outside my district say how frightened they were of eventual expropriation. So, the feeling of insecurity is very widespread and could be and should be, I believe dispelled.

I believe that by a simple word the government can give such assurance. There is very little money involved but a great deal of hope and it means a great deal. I would hope that very, very soon the responsible official of this government would give such an assurance.

Thank you.

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, do I have only five minutes as well? I do, do I not?

MR. SPEAKER: Right.

MR. PECKFORD: This whole business of expropriation relating to homes comes under the Family Homes Expropriation Act, Chapter 123, Section (4). We are dealing with two separate issues here. We are dealing with expropriation as it applies outside of urban renewal areas and we are dealing with expropriation as it applies to urban renewal areas.

It should be said, first of all, that really no other urban renewal schemes exist in this province right now. The whole scheme has been scrapped. We are dealing with new programmes, namely NIP and RAP, which have taken over from the urban renewal schemes.

The honourable member for St. John's North mentioned the Shea Heights and Mundy Pond and the Corner Brook ones. These are being clued up right now. I think this is where most of the problem came in relating to expropriation where it affected people in urban renewal schemes because the expropriation procedure differed in both instances

as it applies to everywhere else excluding urban renewal schemes, you have Section (4) here which says; "In the case of any such expropriation and notwithstanding any rules or provisions for the assessment of values set out in the Statute any which the expropriation is made. The principle of assessment shall be that the owner of the family home shall receive such compensation as will at current costs and prices put him in a position to acquire by purchase or construction a home reasonably equivalent to that which is being expropriated."

Now you cannot argue with the wording of that Section (4), Mr. Speaker, because on the one hand you can talk about the current costs and prices and then in relation to the kind of home that the individual left or the kind of home that he has to go to something along the same lines. But most of the problems that did exist in expropriation exists in the urban renewal scheme, Shea Heights and Mundy Pond and Corner Brook where you had the business of substandard homes. Where it was agreed by the Arbitration Board that usually settled these matters, you had a substandard home, the individual concerned only recourse to accommodation was to rental accommodation. That is explicitly set out in Section (6) of the Act. The Act was amended and this Section (6) was put in.

Now as it applies right now these three urban renewal schemes are just about completed. If you had to bring in some kind of regulation or an amendment to this Act allowing a house for a house you would have one mess on your hands relating to the urban renewal schemes because if you did it now with just cluing up these urban renewal schemes you would have to go back over the whole works of the individuals concerned in the three schemes and try to arrange according to the new amendment that you brought in. So my suggestion here, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a problem here, in relation to the urban renewal scheme it is too late to amend the Act for a house for a house, that these schemes should be clued up as related to the Act as it now stands including the amendment or Section (6) but that the whole issue should be looked at

as related to what was said last year in this honourable House. By the way, Mr. Speaker, it should be pointed out that the whole business of expropriation should be looked at because expropriation can now take place on a number of Acts that have been passed by this honourable House. The Local Government Act, you can expropriate, in certain instances. The City of Corner Brook Act, the City of St. John's Act, the Housing Act, the Planning Act and the main Expropriations Act under the Department of Public Works and Services.

So what is really needed here, taking into consideration the point mentioned by the Member for St. John's North is a whole new look at expropriation per se and some kind of an Act developed to encompass and envelop all these many and varied acts that we now have that each one of them has some kind of a proviso in it which allows for expropriation. But rather now what we should look at is getting a full new Act dealing specifically with expropriation.

I agree that there have been some problems relating to Section (6) in areas of urban renewal. I also think that right now because the urban renewal schemes, the three of them are almost completed, that it would be too late to eliminate that Section (6) to allow a house for a house because it would only result in confusion and frustration but that the whole issue should be looked at. Furthermore, there are no more urban renewal schemes, those are gone. When these three are clued up then we are dealing with new programmes like N.I.P. and R.A.P.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, when the Food Price Review Board made its recommendations in November and presented a copy of their report to the Provincial Government on November 8, I think it was, - presented their recommendations to the Acting Premier, the Minister of Justice, one of the principle recommendations, Sir, made by the Food Prices Review Board, and they stated that they were responding to strong consumer concerns, they recommended that consideration be given to the establishment of a separate ministry of consumer affairs in the provincial government.

This afternoon, Sir, I put a question to the Minister of Provincial Affairs, who is responsible for consumer affairs in this province, whether or not -

MR. MURPHY: Is this on the housing scheme?

MR. NEARY: Oh, sit down, you clown! You clown, sit down!

MR. MURPHY: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Sit down, you jack ass.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I invite the honourable Member for Bell Island to retract the statements made to the Minister of Social Services as being unparliamentary.

MR. NEARY: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Both of them.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker,

Your Honour, if you say the honourable minister is not a clown nor a jackass, Sir, I will withdraw it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

I am asking -

MR. NEARY: If Your Honour -

MR. SPEAKER: I am asking the Honourable Member for Bell Island to retract his unparliamentary statement.

MR. NEARY: Sir, if I must retract, I will retract. But, Sir, I want the honourable minister to retract the remark that he made about the Member for Bell Island being slimy.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Ah! He did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Yes, he did.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: I accept the retraction made by the Honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Now what about the minister, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

If the Honourable Member for Bell Island will permit me, I shall continue.

I quite honestly did not hear the honourable minister say that. I shall certainly hear the tapes. If the honourable minister did say that, I shall ask him for a retraction or if indeed what he said is considered to be unparliamentary.

With regard to the point raised by the Minister of Social Services, the rules are very clear in stating that the person asking the question has five minutes and the person answering has five minutes and no other persons are permitted to take part in the debate.

MR. NEARY: Sir, will I have that deducted from my time now?

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow the honourable member another two or three minutes to give him the full five minutes.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Your Honour.

This afternoon, Sir, I put a question to the Minister of Provincial Affairs as to whether or not the government have taken any steps to set up a department of consumer affairs? The answer that the minister gave me, Sir, (I thought that if it were not such a serious matter, Sir, it would have been funny. It was really pathetic.) was that it was the prerogative of the Premier to appoint a minister of consumer affairs. Well, Sir, that is true but that is not the question I asked the minister. I asked the minister if his government had taken any steps to establish a department of consumer affairs. That is what I asked, Sir. The stund, silly -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. NEARY: The stund, silly -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

I do not know if the Honourable Member for Bell Island is aware of certain statements being parliamentary or unparliamentary, but twice now in a matter of minutes or less, he has used statements which I consider to be unparliamentary and I would ask him to again retract his statement made to the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

MR. NEARY: I retract it, Sir. But, Sir, it is the first time that I knew that that was unparliamentary. It has been used in this House for the last fourteen years since I have been here. Sir, I want to say that the weak-kneed minister did not know the difference, Sir. He did not know how the government goes about establishing a department of consumer affairs. Granted it is the Premier's prerogative to appoint a minister. First of all the government has to bring a bill into this House, Sir, setting up a department of consumer affairs. They have to do it as a matter of government

policy and obviously, Mr. Speaker, the government are so engrossed these days with political activities that they cannot think of anything else by an election. In my opinion, Sir, concerning this matter of the number one problem in this province at the present time, the high cost of living, the government should be charged, if you could charge them, with gross neglect and complete disregard, Mr. Speaker, for the problems of the ordinary people of this province. I thought there was some hope in October, Sir, when the Premier, when he was up to the first minister's conference in Ottawa, said that possibly now (He had changed his mind.) something could be done about inflation, despite the fact that his minister had taken a negative attitude and had more or less rejected the Food Price Review Board Report. The Premier said that he thought something could be done and I thought there was a ray of hope, Sir.

It is obvious now, Mr. Speaker, to anyone with a grain of sense that this government has no intention of doing anything about the number one problem in this province; namely, the high cost of living.

MR. DAWE: Mr. Speaker, that is utter tripe. That is all we can expect, of course, from the Honourable Member for Bell Island who no doubt will be eliminated when the boys at the end of the bay get hold to him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. DAWE: Mr. Speaker, the question which was asked of me was: What was I doing to establish a department of consumer affairs? I answered by saying that I am powerless to do anything. There is not one minister, in his own right in this House, who can divide his department and set up two separate departments. It is impossible. He cannot do it. Only the Premier and his Government has the prerogative to do that. That was the answer which I gave. We have done more, Mr. Speaker, even without a consumer affairs department in our two short years of office than that crowd did in twenty-three

years. They did not do a thing for consumer affairs except allow Kelloway on Bell Island to charge twenty per cent right off the top for cashing welfare cheques.

MR. NEARY: Inaudible.

MR. DAWE: That was great stuff for consumerism was it not? Lovely stuff! We have, Mr. Speaker in our two short years of office, we have doubled the minimum wage from \$1.10, they did not have guts enough to do it. They could not do it. They did not have the guts. They were afraid, frightened to death, frightened to death.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. DAWE: It is now \$2.20 or it will be next month. What have we done with the children's clothing, Mr. Speaker? It could not be done, could it. It could not be done. No, it was not possible, Sir. We could not do it. That is what they said. Well we did it and it is in effect and it is working well. All the mothers in this Province today are proud to have a Tory Government in office who are not afraid to reduce taxes. We took the tax off the home heating oil. We took it off the home heating oil.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DAWE: We took it off the home heating oil. Who cares about beer? The higher it goes the better. You said so yourself.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DAWE: We have established a programme where school children can receive free school books up to grade six and we are going to extend it to grade nine. We brought in a brand new social assistance programme last year and this year we have increased it by 12.7 per cent.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is a beaut'!

MR. DAWE: It sure is a beaut', they did not have the guts to do it when they were in. We brought in a mobile homes act whereby people who purchase a mobile home which is defective now has some recourse. They can now if they buy a trailer with defective stoves or heaters or whatever, furnaces in them, they have some recourse. Before they did not have it. This bunch

over there could not care less. They did not care about bringing in such protective legislation. We have got an Automobile Dealers Act to protect the consumers who purchase used cars and new cars and -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DAVE: He has the gall, the honourable member has the gall to stand up here and say that there has been a complete disregard for the people of this Province. Wait until we have been in another term and another term and you will see.

MR. NEARY: Twenty-five years from now.

MR. DAVE: People in Newfoundland will be living in a complete Utopia. Mr. Speaker, they are a most illogical bunch. They do not stop to think whatsoever. During this redistribution bill they condemn us for having nineteen ministers in government and they say it is the only reason why we are redistributing the districts because we want to justify the high number of Cabinet ministers as they call it. Now they are being illogical by saying that we should create yet another department which will require another minister.

MR. NEARY: Inaudible.

MR. DAVE: That is what they are saying. That is illogical. We have a question, Mr. Speaker, from a member who, maybe I should not, - well,

Mr. Speaker, I think that our record speaks for itself. We have not sat back and done nothing. What are we expecting from the prits in Ottawa? What are they doing for us, eh? Get after your buddies in Ottawa. See if they can help us out. Tell them not to cut down the seventeen per cent freight rate subsidies to fifteen. Tell them to jack it up, jack it up to nineteen per cent. Get it up to twenty. Get after them to put that subsidy on evaporated milk that comes into the Province. Come on, do something constructive for heavens sake.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DAVE: Sure they are. There was a greater consumption of evaporated milk in this Province than -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The honourable member has consumed his five minutes.

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MR. DAVE: I have also adequately answered the question, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow.

Friday, December 13, 1974 at 3:00 p.m.