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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!

MR. E. ROBERTS (LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION): Mr. Speaker, before we go into ministerial statements. Yesterday the death occurred of a man who played a very leading role in Newfoundland and I think it appropriate that the House note its regret. The Premier may wish to move the motion. That is the usual form and I would be happy to second it. I am referring of course, to the Reverend Doctor A.J. Barrett, a man who served Newfoundland for quite a number of years both in the act of pastoral work of the United Church - he served, I am told, at Musgrave Town and at Cochrane Street and at Wesley here in St. John's, then latterly at the Memorial United Church in Grand Falls itself. Following that he was appointed president as we are all aware of the Bible Society in Newfoundland. He served in that post for the better part of eight to ten years and retired a year or so passed.

Dr. Barrett died yesterday here in St. John's and I would ask - the Premier may wish to say a word or two - that the House take note of his death in the usual way and that a message of sympathy be sent to his widow and to the members of his family. Dr. Barrett is one of these men who played a prominent role in the public life of Newfoundland. We are all the losers because of his passing.

HON. F.D. MOORES (PREMIER): Mr. Speaker, it would seem that recently the very prominent people in our province, a lot of them are passing away unfortunately. I certainly would like to at this time - I apologize for not having done it earlier - but I would like to ask the House to join with me in an expression of deepest sympathy in the passing of the Reverend A.J. Barrett.

Dr. Barrett was a prominent and distinguished United Church clergyman as has been stated by the Leader of the Opposition. He passed away on Sunday at the age of sixty-seven. Dr. Barrett was born in Old Perlican where the Barrett family still resides, a great many of them. He served with the United States ministry with extraordinary capacity and resourcefulness. He loved Newfoundland and was regarded with affection throughout this province by all those, Mr. Speaker, who knew him.

As the district secretary for the Canadian Bible Society, Dr. Barrett served with dedication and sincerity and his valuable service is well recognized throughout this province. As I said previously, I know all members of the House of Assembly will join with me in offering respect and sympathy to the family of Dr. Barrett. I move that this expression of condolence be communicated to his family.

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. ROBERTS: I ask leave to present a petition signed by approximately 1800 electors of the District of White Bay South. The prayer of the petition, Sir, I think is well stated and the argument in support of it. Perhaps I could read the petition itself to the honourable Speaker and members of the honourable House of Assembly of Newfoundland.

The petition of the undersigned residents of the District of White Bay South humbly sheweth that;
WHEREAS the member of the House of Assembly for White Bay South resigned on August 31, 1974;
AND WHEREAS we the citizens of the District of

White Bay South have a right to be represented in the House of Assembly; and
WHEREAS the only way in which we can exercise that right is by means of
a by-election in which we can elect a new member; and
WHEREAS under the laws of Newfoundland and Labrador a by-election can be
called only by order of the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council, the Cabinet; and
WHEREAS the Cabinet have not yet ordered that the by-election be held; and
WHEREAS the proposed redistribution act will not affect the District of
White Bay South or any other district until the next general election; and
WHEREAS the next general election may not be held for more than two years.

Now therefore we your petitioners humbly pray that the House of
Assembly direct and require the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council to call the
by-election immediately, with Polling Day to be set at the earliest date
authorized by the laws of Newfoundland and Labrador so that we the people
of White Bay South may exercise our democratic rights to choose our member
in the House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I support this wholeheartedly. We
believe that the people in White Bay South have a right to choose, have a
right to speak, and have a right to send a man or woman to this House to speak
for them. It is entirely in the hands of the government when that by-election
is held. It is much to be regretted that in Newfoundland we do not have
legislation making a by-election mandatory within a period of months. We
had the experience in Ferryland a number of years ago. We were the government
then. It was not particularly a happy experience but what is, is. Hermitage
was open for the better part of seven or eight months before the government
called a by-election. White Bay South has now been open for all of September,
all of October, all of November, for three months. The former member, my
colleague, Bill Powe, gave a month and a-half notice of his decision to
resign, so the government have had four and a-half months notice that the
seat is open.

There is no reason, Sir, that the government should not hold that
by-election. As I have said repeatedly, the only reason why they will not
hold it is a lack of political courage on the part of the administration. I
would urge that this petition be received, Sir, and referred to the department
to which it relates. In so doing, I would urge on behalf of us all, that

the Premier and the government move immediately to have that by-election held.

HON. F. D. MOORES (PREMIER): Mr. Speaker, in speaking in support of the petition for the people of White Bay South wanting to have a member in the House of Assembly, of course, we agree with that. It is unfortunate that they saw fit to elect a member who did not see fit to represent them for the full period for which he was elected.

WHEREAS the Member for White Bay South is gone to Paris and

WHEREAS the Leadership of the Liberal Party was in doubt for some time and we thought maybe it should be held in abeyance until such time as we found out who that gentleman may or may not be; and

WHEREAS there also may be a general election at any time, Mr. Speaker, but one never knows when, certainly the by-election in White Bay South will be held at the appropriate time.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, if there is anybody in this province that knows about not representing their district it is certainly the Hon. the Premier when he was elected to represent the riding of Bonavista/Trinity/ Conception in Ottawa -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: He had the worst record of absenteeism in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The right to reply in support or to make comments re: a petition presented, is a courtesy extended to honourable members but honourable members should bear in mind that they should speak to the prayer of that petition and not be irrelevant to that prayer as the honourable Member for Bell Island was.

MR. NEARY: I will accept Your Honour's ruling but we expect, Sir, on this side of the House to get the same privileges as the members who speak on the government side.

But, Sir, the gentleman to whom the Premier referred, in my opinion, was a very worthy representative of the District of White Bay South. He did a very honourable job indeed, Sir, and this House is going to miss Bill Rowe despite what the Premier says. I support this petition, Sir, for the simple reason that I think it is the democratic right of the people in the District of White Bay South to have an elected representative on the floor of this House,

to speak in behalf of the people in that district.

We are told, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier has taken on another party hack down on the eighth floor who will be groomed to be the candidate in White Bay South. A Liberal?

MR. ROBERTS: Inaudible.

MR. NFARY: Since when?

MR. ROBERTS: A nice fellow but no Liberal.

MR. NFARY: I do not know where they are, they must be stacking them up down there on the eighth floor now, Sir. They have a new switchboard operator down there. They have a few more flunkies down there. They have a crowd trying to get the Minister of Municipal Affairs job.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Again, I remind the honourable Member for Bell Island he

is not anywhere being relevant to the prayer of the petition and if he continues in this vein I will have to ask him to take his seat and recognize another member.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I support the prayer of the petition and I challenge the Premier that if he has any political backbone at all that he will call the by-election immediately in the District of White Bay South; call the by-election. Let us have a general election. A general election would suit me fine because the people of this Province cannot wait to get into the polling booths to kick that crowd out. But at least give the people down in White Bay South an opportunity to get their elected representative on the floor of the House, somebody who can speak on their behalf.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the petition and I do so because of the remarks made by the Hon. the Premier suggesting that the honourable member resigned from his seat before his term was up. I might add, Mr. Speaker, that the member for White Bay South did give, I believe, one and a half months notice before he resigned from that position thereby giving the government ample warning and time for preparation for a by-election in that particular district. I think the only fair and square thing for the Hon. the Premier and his government to do now is to call a by-election in White Bay South as quickly as possible, particularly since this notice was given three months since passed, since the resignation of the member and I might add before the Premier goes lipping off about people not finishing their term that the honourable Minister of Fisheries resigned both his seat and his portfolio without any notice whatsoever being given whereas the honourable member for White Bay South at least had the decency to give the House of Assembly and the people of Newfoundland due notice in time for a by-election.

I suggest that the Premier call this by-election immediately and I give wholehearted support for the petition.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Recreation and Rehabilitation.

MR. T. DOYLE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to beg leave of the House to present a petition. It is from approximately sixty per cent of the people in the community

of Calvert in my District of Ferryland. The prayer of the petition is that they would like to have some land burned over in or near the community for the purpose of providing the people with a substantial blueberry crop. The blueberry grounds have all but disappeared due to overgrowth. The people feel that this is very necessary as it would be of great benefit to them eventually both directly and indirectly especially in these days of rapid inflation when our people are finding it so difficult to make ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, I have much pleasure in supporting this petition and ask to have it placed on the table of the House and referred to the department to which it is concerned.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bonavista North.

MR. P. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House in support of the petition from the good people of Calvert. In supporting that petition, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the blueberry crop in Newfoundland is one of the most underestimated potentials that we have on the whole Island. I take note that my District of Bonavista North last year and in previous years provide about two-thirds of the crop in Newfoundland that is exported. I would like to point out to the honourable members that the blueberry is the only fruit in Newfoundland which is exported. I believe -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: I am sorry, maybe with the exception of some honourable members.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. MORGAN: The only one exported permanently.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to see the government and particularly -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, there is an awful confusion here for some reason or other. I would like to see, Mr. Speaker, the government pay more attention not only to the blueberry industry but to agriculture in general. I trust that the new Minister of Forestry and Agriculture under whose department this comes under, will pay special attention to it and give it the attention that it deserves. Also the financial support that it deserves.

All over the Island of Newfoundland we have a huge potential in blueberries alone and I trust that this government will pay special attention to them. I may note, Mr. Speaker, that the Federal Government is paying attention to it because this year some of the L.I.P. programmes are covering blueberry farms in Newfoundland. I have one approved in my district and I think this is a very worthwhile project and I congratulate the Federal Government for its interest in our blueberry crop.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN:

MR. NEARY: The honourable minister promised me an answer to a question today. The minister came away and left it in his office. He is going to give me a copy later on this afternoon and table the answer tomorrow.

MR. WINSOR: May I direct a question to the Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications? By the way, I am very happy to see him in his seat after an absence.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. WINSOR: I do not envy the honourable gentleman for taking a holiday. I think he deserves a holiday. We should not hold that against him. However, getting back to my question, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister if there are any arrangements made for sand on Fogo Island this year, to sand the roads? Last year we had quite a problem. The minister's predecessor is probably fully aware of the trouble. It is a problem the people of Fogo Island have because of a lack of sand. Has the honourable minister done anything about this or if not..?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Searching sands down in Southport.

As I am sure the honourable member is aware, we had a meeting with the people from Fogo; we had three representatives from the island there. We have some problems, as you know, with the sand down in Fogo. Two weeks ago when I left - I have not been back to the office since, I just got back in town last night - we were going to look into it. We know it is a problem. Perhaps to get the details of your answer, I would have to wait until tomorrow to check it out tomorrow morning sometime as to what has been done. We did hold a meeting with residents representing the whole Island of Fogo in relation to the sand problem, which the member, I am sure, recognizes as being a big one. Tomorrow I will try to get the details of what just has been worked out.

The alternative we had was the possibility of bringing it over in boats which would be a rather large figure. There are not many places down there. The people would like to keep the beaches that are down there. There is some fear as to what the problem may be there. I will check out just what has been done by the department. I will probably have the specifics of the answer tomorrow I would hope.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of Treasury Board, Sir, but my problem is that I do not know who the President of the Treasury Board is at the moment. The Premier announced some time ago that the Minister of Industrial Development was the -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, this is a legitimate - I want to direct a question, Sir, to the President of the Treasury Board and I do not know who the gentleman is. The Premier announced the Minister of Industrial Development was the President of Treasury Board. Yet the minister indicated to me the other day, when I put a question to him, that the Minister of Finance was the President of the Treasury Board.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

It is usually the custom in any legislature that when the Speaker rises, the member standing must take his seat. It is not for the Chair to decide nor indeed, I suppose, to know who the President of the Treasury Board is. It is the feeling of the Chair that any honourable member asking a question of the President of the Treasury Board should know who he is before he directs a question to him.

MR. NEARY: Would the honourable Premier clear this matter up and indicate to the House who the real President of the Treasury Board is?

MR. MOORES: Would the real President of the Treasury Board please stand up?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. MOORES: The situation is, Sir, that because of an act of this House, the President of the Treasury Board, through an act of this Legislature, is the Minister of Finance. However, there will be an amendment to that brought in in this session whereby that will not be the case but will be at the discretion of the Premier as are the other ministries. The person who is actually performing the functions of the Treasury Board as president and who will be the president, when the act is amended, is the Hon. Member for Hr. Main, the Hon. Minister of Industrial Development.

MR. NEARY: So we have a legal one and an illegal one.

Sir, would the President of Treasury Board indicate to the House why it is that the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

branch in Stephenville will not negotiate with its employees and they all booked off sick today.

HON. H.R.V. EARLE (MINISTER OF FINANCE): We are trying to find out, Mr. Speaker, and I will take notice of that.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, would the president of Treasury Board and the Minister of Finance care to indicate to the House just now what is the exact situation concerning the employees at Exon House.

MR. DOODY: Would the honourable member care for an answer from me on behalf of the Minister of Finance?

MR. NEARY: I do not care who answers the question as long as we get the information.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Go ahead, answer.

MR. DOODY: If the honourable member wants to know the situation at Exon House now, Sir - I am speaking on behalf of the President of Treasury Board who is now the Minister of Finance - it is one that seems to be coming under the kind of situation we would like to see there. The people are presently meeting with Treasury Board officials. The problems are being discussed and I would think that they will be looked after.

The staff problems that they have had there in terms of numbers of people are being looked at very carefully. I think that new posts will be created and new people will be put in there.

The other situations that were raised during the unfortunate incident of a few weeks ago will be looked at in more detail at the time of the general collective bargaining itself when it takes place. Right now, as I understand it, the situation is pretty well under control. All the problems that the staff have had down there are not resolved. We are trying to do what we can to see that they are.

We know it is a most difficult situation in these homes. We appreciate very much the work that the staff have done there and are continuing to do. We are very conscious of the fact that they are an essential service and we are doing everything that we possibly can to keep them happy and give them the right conditions that they deserve.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister indicated that they are at the present time negotiating with the employees over there. Well, when can the employees at Exon House expect to get a decision on their request of increase in pay? Will they get it before Christmas? Tomorrow? Next week? When will they get a decision? Give me a chance to finish the question. Okay, I am finished now. Go ahead.

MR. DOODY: Which question does the honourable member want answered first?

MR. NEARY: The request for an increase in pay, this occupational hazard pay that they requested.

MR. DOODY: That is one of the items that is under discussion now with these people by Treasury Board officials. I certainly would not even dream of bringing it up here now in the House. It is a matter between the two collective bargaining units involved, Treasury Board and the Exon House and Nape representatives. When the situation is resolved, I am certainly sure that an announcement will be made at that time.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate how soon a decision will be taken by Treasury Board on this increase in pay? Will it be this year? Will they have to wait until next year? The minister must have some idea.

The other question, the matter of -

MR. DOODY: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Yes, sure. Go ahead.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated twice, it is a matter that is under discussion between the various parties involved. It would not only be presumptuous of me to try to anticipate what the result of the discussions would be, it would be idiotic and it would almost be indicative of the sort of policies that the Department of Labour or the previous administration were used to.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, seeing the minister is so jumpy and irritable and cocky today, could he tell us about the situation out in the Linerboard Mill? Is it on the auction block? Is the Linerboard Mill going to be sold to Price? Just what is the situation concerning the sale or the governments desire to get rid of the Linerboard Mill? Would the minister care to clarify that situation for us?

MR. DOODY: What has that got to do with me?

MR. NEARY: The honourable member is the Minister of Industrial Development is he not?

MR. DOODY: Oh, I see. I thought we were still on the Treasury Board case.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said many times publicly by the Chairman of the Labrador Linerboard Board, the honourable Minister of Fisheries and by the Premier and by myself that the mill is certainly available to any interested parties who might be able to present an offer to the province that would be in the best interests of the province and of the industry as a whole. It is certainly not, now or ever will be, thrown into the market place as a fire sale unit. It is a very important part of the economy of the province, even though it is costing us a great deal of money. We have absolutely no intention of placing in jeopardy the jobs of the people who are employed there and we do not intend to just throw it on the market as a fire sale unit.

If the time comes when a reasonable deal can be made with an interested party, then certainly the province is interested in looking at it.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I can assume from the minister's answer then that no negotiations are currently under way to sell the Linerboard Mill. Nobody is interested in the Linerboard Mill at the present time.

MR. DOODY: The honourable member is entitled to make any assumption he wishes, Sir.

MR. NEARY: No, I am asking the minister. Would the minister tell me are there any negotiations going on by any firm to buy the Linerboard Mill at the moment?

MR. DOODY: To the best of my knowledge, there are none at the present time.

MR. NEARY: I see the Minister of Fisheries over there, Sir, looking over at me rather quizzically. Does the minister have anything to add to that answer?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, even if I had anything to add to the answer I would not add it because the Hon. Minister of Industrial Development is answering it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. I am glad to see the minister back in the House. I want to get back, Sir, to the old bogaboo of the arterial road, the St. John's Harbour arterial road. I am sure the minister must have done a great deal of thinking about it when he was in Florida. Could the minister tell us now the precise status of the arterial road? Is it going to be completed? Is it not going to be completed? Does it rate number one priority with his department at the moment and with the government? What is the situation on the arterial road? The Premier is getting edgy, he may want to answer it.

HON. J. G. ROUSSEAU (MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS): The government policy on the arterial road I presume is: it is going to have to be finished. That is our hope. The original situation was that the federal government would pay one hundred per cent of the cost. In recent months they have indicated that they are no longer willing to put in one hundred per cent of the cost. The provincial government are not happy with that situation. Presently we are in the situation where we are negotiating with DREF with respect to funds that might be available for the on-going process of the arterial route next year. The government have stated that the arterial route, of course, will not be finished at any expense to the rest of the road programmes in the province. There are a number of problems involved there that I am sure the member can appreciate. As soon as we hear from Ottawa - the minister responsible for intergovernmental affairs and myself met on the roads programme recently and we talked about the arterial road. That will be presented to Ottawa but not at the situation that Ottawa now wishes. We certainly feel that if Ottawa, in the original instance, pledged one hundred per cent of the cost with us providing the right-of-way, and the other things that the province had to do and we have done in good faith then it is only logical in our opinion that the federal government would live up to its original commitment of one hundred per cent. We are prepared to sit down and talk with them but there is no way that we are going to go into any cost sharing programme with the original commitment being one hundred per cent.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, Sir. My understanding is that the Government of Canada are withholding grants to a water system for the expansion of the water system in Gander because the Government here, the Department of Transportation and Communications have placed number one priority on the arterial road. Could the minister confirm or deny whether this is true or not? Is the water system in Gander being held back because the government are pressing ahead for one hundred per cent contribution to the completion of the arterial road?⁷

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Well there it is in the "Telegram" book. There is the clipping book.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Fisheries.

HON. J. G. CROSBIE (MINISTER OF FISHERIES): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing can elaborate on this a bit more. The position quite clearly is, with respect - not only to the Town of Gander's request for a water supply but all - and this has been made clear time after time I think in the last few months but in connection with all requests for assistance, for infrastructure, water and sewerage systems and the like that are not connected to some specific development potential, that none of them are acceptable to the Government of Canada at Ottawa.

There are no longer special areas agreements in the future. Ottawa is only interested in assisting if there is a subsidiary agreement entered into under the general development agreement and anything it assists in must be related directly to a development opportunity to further economic or industrial development. The position therefore is that requests for municipal water and sewerage systems and the like are not eligible for assistance under the DPEE programme unless we can show some definite connection to economic and industrial development. That is quite simply the position.

Now within the next week or two I am trying to arrange a meeting with Mr. Jamieson to review the highway situation and other agreements for next year. At that meeting we intended to take up again every specific project that we have requested under the infrastructure agreement and to ask Mr. Jamieson's department to confirm, yes or no, whether they consider any one of those to be eligible for DREF assistance. I can assure the honourable gentleman up to

this time such projects, as the one at Gander, are not eligible for assistance from DREE. We are going to insist that we get a clearer answer on every one so that every municipality involved can be informed of the exact position. That is certainly the position up to date.

Mr. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, would the minister then -

is stating that one project will not be matched off against the other. They will not be presented to the DREE minister in order of priority. For instance, the Arterial Road would come before the water supply at Gander. Is this the understanding I get from the minister?

MR. CROSBIE: The Arterial Road is quite a different agreement. We have made it quite clear to the Government of Canada, Mr. Speaker, that the St. John's Arterial Road was started under the agreement that they were going to pay 100 per cent of the cost, that the Province would only have the cost of acquiring the land and the right of way. That was how the St. John's Harbour Arterial started out. Now they have retreated a long way from that since.

We have made it clear to the Government of Canada that we do not want any money for the St. John's Harbour Arterial Road, if there is any suggestion that that is to have higher priority than other major arterial roads in the Province such as the Great Northern Peninsula or the Bonavista North Loop Road or whatever. That project should be dealt with on its own merit. We are not suggesting it has any great priority or even as great a priority as other roads that might be eligible for DREE assistance.

MR. NEARY: One cannot have his cake and eat it too.

MR. CROSBIE: When we see them in the next several weeks, Mr. Speaker, that will be gone over with them. We feel they should proceed with the Harbour Arterial, well, quite clearly on a basis that this does not affect what funds they provide for other DREE roads.

Now that has no connection either with water and sewerage projects or water systems or anything else and they stand on their own feet. Now as I have said before and to just reiterate again, there is no chance of having a project approved for DREE participation if it does not relate to a development opportunity. An ordinary municipal water and sewerage system no matter how desirable it is from the social point of view, will not receive DREE assistance unless they agree it has some specific value from an industrial or economic development point of view.

Now as all members of the House know this government has been

tremendously successful, Mr. Speaker, in getting assistance through DREE from Ottawa and under the recently signed fishery subsidiary agreement there are a number of water lines and fish plants that they are helping to finance and indirectly help the municipality they are in. They are only financed on the basis that they are providing a development opportunity to a fish plant. They will not do it, they do not want to do it if there is no development opportunity associated with it.

Now there were a large number of things that were suggested by the Province and my learned colleague, the junior member from Harbour Main is looking after these matters. A whole infrastructure agreement was suggested, put up to Ottawa and they definitely and specifically have come back and said they do not want to enter into any infrastructure agreement. Is that correct, honourable friend?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: So that is the position.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Hon. the Premier would clear up a matter for me. Is it correct that within the last few days the Maritime freight rate subsidy on freight coming into the Atlantic Provinces has been reduced by two or three per cent which will thus add another burden to the already high cost of living in this Province?

PREMIER MOORES: I should take notice of that question, Mr. Speaker. I would say as far as the Provincial Government is concerned we certainly have not increased it. If it has it has been from the Federal Government. I would like to check and make sure exactly what the rate increase is and why they did it.

MR. NEARY: While the Premier is at it, Mr. Speaker -

MR. J. ROUSSEAU: I wonder if I could mention a point on that, if I may.

MR. NEARY: Yes, sure.

MR. ROUSSEAU: The Federal Government in Ottawa apparently went out west and talked with the western provinces on the removal of the freight rate subsidy that they had. They did not deign to consult the eastern provinces. The eastern provinces made a request to Ottawa that the eastern provinces

be consulted as well. We hope to have a meeting, the ministers in Atlantic Canada including Quebec, sometime before January. In the meantime we also hope to have a meeting of Atlantic Provinces ministers responsible sometime before that to have our position. Ottawa has now agreed to meet with us and get our thoughts on it. Certainly I can assure the honourable member from Bell Island and the honourable members on the other side of the House and the people of this Province that we have no thought that we would ever support any removal of this freight rate subsidy. We certainly will do all we can to maintain it as it now is and certainly when we meet with our counterparts here in Atlantic Canada, when we meet with the federal minister responsible we will certainly press that point.

MR. NEARY: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the minister knows more about this than the Hon. the Premier. Would the minister indicate then whether or not it is too late to make representation, that the decision has already been taken by the Canadian Transport Commission or has the Province or will the Province protest it or have they already made any protests and will the minister table any letters of protest made to the Canadian Transport Commission on the reduction in this subsidy?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Well, I can assure the honourable member that if that decision has already been made without consultation -

MR. NEARY: I am asking the minister.

MR. ROUSSEAU: To the ministers of Eastern Canada

and specifically to the minister of this province, responsible for transportation, you will hear and you will have tabled any correspondence and the correspondence will be quite strong that if the federal government in Ottawa decides, in a unilateral action, to remove that freight rate subsidy without even consulting the minister responsible in Atlantic Canada, I would think, and most definitely the minister responsible for this province, then certainly there will be loud howls, loud and clear, heard right across this province as far as we are concerned. We have no question about our continued support of this freight rate subsidy. We think it should be included, especially here in Eastern Canada where the need is great for the supplies that are coming down from Central Canada. I can assure the member, who is asking the question, and the other members on the other side of the House that we will fight for the retention of that subsidy.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's answer. We will be watching what is going on.

I wonder if the Premier could make a comment on a story that has been making the rounds of late, that 115 employees of Price Newfoundland are going to lose their jobs? Would the Premier care to comment on that?

MR. MOORES: I do not know anything about it.

MR. NEARY: He does not know anything about it?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Well I refer the honourable the Premier to the "Evening Telegram," November 4: "One hundred and fifteen may lose jobs at mill."

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the Hon. Member for Bell Island contact the "Evening Telegram" for his answer because I have been talking with Price and I have been talking with the union out there, there is some concern about the Botwood Railway but to my knowledge, the subject has not been broached. Apparently the media and the Member

for Bell Island have something going or he has something going or he is confused or he believes everything he reads. Certainly, there is a problem, Sir.

MR. NEARY: But, Sir, I read the story three or four times in the newspaper now.

MR. MOORES: It will take you three or four times to see what is in it.

MR. NEARY: While the Premier brought it up, the matter of the railway closing, "Railway closing brings protest." The Premier just mentioned the closing of the spur line to Botwood, from Grand Falls to Botwood, which will cost this province about forty or fifty jobs. Would the Premier care to comment on that? Has the province protested the closing of that line?

MR. MOORES: The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the province is in discussions with the company and with the union on that very subject and have been for several weeks, ever since it has been announced.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, now that we have the Premier in a talking mood, would the Premier indicate to the House just what his government has done to help the sawmill operators in this province? We are told that they are just about all bankrupt. What is the province doing to try to market the surplus of lumber that they have on hand?

MR. MOORES: First of all, Mr. Speaker, the province established the sawmills.

MR. NEARY: Without investigating.

MR. MOORES: The province established the sawmills to try to develop some employment in rural Newfoundland. The sawmill industry, Sir, that sort of product is in trouble nationwide, as the honourable member may or may not know but it is in fact. Certainly here in Newfoundland the business of government contracts, where local timber can be used, such will be incorporated. This is our intention. We will be doing everything we can to aid and abet the development of the rural part of our province. A great deal, Sir, is being done to make survive or to help survive an industry that, in fact, had been

neglected for so many years. As this government was responsible for establishing a great many of the new sawmills, we will also be responsible for trying to help that industry become prosperous.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Premier's enthusiasm about granting rural development loans and so forth to sawmill operators. The question I put to the Premier is: Could he be more specific and indicate to the House just what it is the government is going to do to help the sawmill operators through this difficult period?

MR. MOORES: I just said that government contracts, where local labour could be used or local materials, will be given first priority. I would say, Sir, that that is being fairly specific in a very large area.

I am also wondering, Sir, (I know it is not my position to ask) is three per cent asking all the questions or are we going to get some from the other ninety-seven per cent on the other side of the House?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Do you want me to send you over this kiss that the Minister of Industrial Development just gave me?

MR. NEARY: The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing there seems to be eager to get up on his feet, so perhaps I will put a question to him. I might get a direct answer. The Tenancy Board Head resigned recently, Mr. Riche. Could the minister indicate when he intends to fill this vacancy?

MR. PECKBORD: A direct answer to a direct question, Mr. Speaker. That board does not come under the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing but rather under the Department of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

MR. NEARY: Well perhaps Teddy Bear could give us the answer down there. Let us have the answer.

HON. G. DAWE (MINISTER OF PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS AND ENVIRONMENT): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Riche resigned effective the 31st. of December, 1975 and on the 1st. of January, 1976 -

MR. NEARY: What?

MR. DAWE: I am sorry, 1974. On the 1st. of January, 1975 we will have a new chairman.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Health could tell us if the enquiry that was launched into the water supply in the Upper Gullies school is yet completed? And will the investigation, the enquiry be made public? Will it be tabled in the House?

HON. DR. A. ROWE (MINISTER OF HEALTH): Mr. Speaker, the enquiry is under the direction of Magistrate Corbett. He is working on it. I have no idea when this report will be ready and I am not in a position to say whether it will be made public.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the council down in Marystown are up in their wool because they cannot get a study, a federal study that was done -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: What is wrong? Are you getting nervous? Mr. Speaker, I think they are all getting shellshocked. They are all getting shellshocked over there, Sir. The council down in Marystown are anxious to get a report of the study that was done by Mr. T. J. Dalton to try and establish whether or not a port of call should be designated on the Burin Peninsula? Would the Premier care to indicate to the House whether the province has received the report, and if they have will they pass it on to the poor old mayor and

council down in Marystown and put them out of their misery down there.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. the Premier.

HON. F. D. MOORES (PREMIER): I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the member for that particular district answer the question. I am not talking about the provincial member, I am talking about the federal member.

MR. NEAPY: Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a picture in the Evening Telegram November 1, showing the CFLCO directors meet in the City. In that picture, Sir, are two or three well known Tories but what I want to ask the Premier is; will Mr. James Greene who was elected as President of the Provincial Tory Association, who was a member of the Board of Directors, will he now be dropped from the Board of Directors and from all the other jobs from which he receives pay from the Provincial Treasury because of the obvious conflict of interest?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. MOORES: If, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is talking about political patronage of that sort, I am sure he is not recommending that every Liberal over the past twenty-three years who have been appointed to various positions in this province be dismissed all at once because that is what will be happening.

MR. NEAPY: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Premier does not intend to answer that question. Sir, I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation and Communications what his department is doing about Safe Driving Week? This is Safe Driving Week in Newfoundland. What specific plans do they have for Safe Driving Week, if any?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

AN HON. MEMBER: He is beginning to worry you, hey?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

HON. J. C. ROUSSEAU (MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS): If you will wait until tomorrow I will get you a concrete answer to that but, of course, as you know with the Department of Transportation and Communications fifty-two weeks of the year is Safe Driving Week to them. Of course, their efforts are spread out over a year.

What specifically is being done now I am not aware of. It is specifically Safe Driving Week but we will certainly check and give you the reply tomorrow.

MR. POFFETS: Maybe they will hire George McLean

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Fogo.

MR. F. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications. Has there been any direct request made through the federal government through the Department of DPFF for the paving of what is known as the 'Loop Road'?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: The Premier wrote a note on the back of an envelope down in Carmanville saying that he was going to pave it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. the Premier.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, the situation on the Loop Road as I met with a delegation some time ago, we met with the officials of the Department of Highways. It has been requested, I believe, through the minister responsible for intergovernmental affairs that it be included in their project but there has been a commitment undertaken by this government that, that road will be done over a period of time with so much per year.

MR. P. THOMS: You never answered the question.

MR. MOORES: Yes, I did. Of course, I did.

MR. THOMS: (Inaudible).

MR. WINSOR: Has there been a direct request made to DREE for a specific amount of assistance for that particular road?

MR. MOORES: The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is that Mr. Jamieson and the Minister Responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs have been meeting literally, I think, this week or the first of next week at which time that whole roads' programme for the province, the DREE aspect of it and the provincial aspect of it, will be dealt with. I think it would be wrong to specify any one particular one being given priority at this moment until after that time.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: So the answer is no.

MR. MOORES: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, no I will not say it.

MR. WINSOR: A supplementary: I would direct to the Premier up until this present time no direct request has been made to DREE for that particular road.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, if I might put that in perspective. I said there was an undertaking taken to the people of the area that that road would be done.

MR. NEARY: On the back of an envelope?

MR. MOORES: In which area whether it is DREE or the Provincial Government or a combination of both. We will wait negotiations with DREE as will the other roads in the Province.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is still not answering the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I would like to inform the honourable members that the thirty minute question period has expired.

MR. NEARY: So soon, Sir. I thought we had two or three minutes left there, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The thirty minutes has expired.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: - poor, old Steve.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the House in accordance with Standing Order No. 23 that the regular business of the House be adjourned to debate a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the report of the Food Prices Review Board on the high cost of food in Newfoundland and Labrador. Now that the Board has pinpointed the cause of high food prices in this Province, the next step, Mr. Speaker, is to discuss measures that could be taken by the Government of this Province to eliminate the chief cause of high food prices, namely, the superfluous levels of distribution of food products that may have been justifiable in the past but no longer have any real utility today and ways and means by which the Government of this Province can encourage through a special crown corporation or some existing government department the implementation of the food prices review boards recommendations.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The matter of the increased prices and the Food Prices Review Board's Report has been the topic of discussion here in the past couple of days. I feel that while we are all interested in it, it does not warrant the adjournment of the regular business of this House to debate that particular topic at this time.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

On motion of the Hon. Minister of Justice, a bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Automobile Insurance Act," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion (1) was the resolution that the Premier introduced last day. I think the honourable Leader of the Opposition adjourned the debate.

December 2, 1974.

Tape 1807

RH - 3

MR. E. ROBERTS: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me first of all, just comment as did my colleague, the member for Bell Island, that

the fact that this resolution is called today is again a pretty telling example of priorities which the administration attached to the business of our province. This resolution is being given priority over the cost of living and over the fisheries and over any other topic that the government can dream of or that the people of Newfoundland can conceive of.

I think that is a pretty telling example. I think it is a pretty dramatic way to show once again that the government really do not care at all for the concerns of the average Newfoundlander. Instead of debating the issues which affect the people of this province we have been summoned together at the end of November, and I do not particularly mind that at all, it is a pleasant way to spend the pre-Christmas period as one can imagine but we have been summoned together not to discuss the 322 important issues but to discuss the question of redistribution. Even if we are to have an early election as the Premier would have us believe and as I fervently hope, I think all of my colleagues hope that we will have an early election, even if we are to have that surely we could find a little time to discuss such things as food prices. We are apparently going to be allowed to discuss the fisheries a little later on, to discuss the issues that affect people all over this province.

Well we are not. So we will have to deal with the motion. The government do have control of the business of the House, of course, and so we will have to deal with the matters they tend to raise but let me say that people all over Newfoundland are taking note of this. I do not think that any subject has quite so much exercised people in the last two or three years as this particular display. I had thought that redistribution although it is of great concern to the members of the House and although it should be of concern to every Newfoundlander, I must confess that I thought that redistribution would not attract very much attention at all from people around the province. Nor has it. Let us not fool ourselves or delude ourselves for one second, Mr. Speaker. We may be here for the next two or three days and all of us up saying a few words or a few hundred or a few thousand words on redistribution and on the resolution before the House, then upon the bill which in due course will follow it. Redistribution has not drawn the comment. What has drawn the comment, is

the fact that here we are talking about it and taking up the time of the House in dealing with it and we should be dealing with infinitively more important issues, the school tax.

The school tax. Who gets excited? I stand to benefit from the school tax. My little accountant tells me I am now paying \$120.00 a year, being \$12.00 a month for each of ten months to the Avalon Consolidated School Board for school purposes here in St. John's, an assessment. I will only be paying \$75 a year if the new roll tax goes through. So I stand to benefit. That is very nice. The extra \$45.00 a year will doubtless get spent somewhere else. There are hundreds of people and thousands of people in St. John's who will not benefit, who will be hit hard, they are the people who can least afford it.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please. The honourable member knows very well this is a matter which is irrelevant to this resolution.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, it is irrelevant to talk about details on school tax and I obviously do not propose to. What is relevant to the resolution, Sir, as I shall show if I am permitted by the Chair to do it, is that, we are talking here of increasing - and the resolution before the House is to increase the number of MPAs at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars a year, \$130,000 in salaries and allowances alone and heaven knows what in clerks. At a time when - and our people are being asked to pay this increase. Nobody else is going to pay for it, Sir. Dree are not going to pay for this one. The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs or whatever - there is no such title - but the Minister of Fisheries who has the responsibility for being in charge of liaison between here and Ottawa will not be able to get DREF to agree to this. We are going to be asked to pay for it. The school tax that is one of the things people believe we should be talking about, all over Newfoundland.

The government, in a sense, I shall welcome that they do not deal with the issues that concern people because they will get their answer when this Redistribution Bill, when the districts constituted under it come into effect. They will get their answer then. But I do not propose to take narrowly partisan attitude. There is nothing wrong with partisan politics, it is part of the stuff and substance of this House and this system but I do think there is something that should be objected to and I do object to it, it is

that, we are sitting here talking about redistribution as if it is the only or the most important issue and this from the government that used to talk of priorities and used to talk of planning.

Their only priority, Sir, is trying to get re-elected. Their only plan is the increasingly desperate effort to attempt to do that.

They found out in July, they found out in Hermitage, they found out in October 1972 and they found out in Labrador South, as well, their plans and their priorities and they will find out when they get the courage to call White Bay South and when they get the courage to go to the people in a general election.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin my few remarks on this Resolution by thanking the Premier for his courtesy in sending my colleagues and me a map of the proposed boundaries, of the boundaries which would be constituted by the schedule to the Resolution we now have before us. We asked him and he was kind enough to send us that map. We did get it and it turned out that we did not need it because my colleague the Member for Bonavista North, among his many other excellent qualities is a surveyor. He took the printed schedule, the meets and bounds descriptions and he sequestered himself with an ordinary map of the province and followed it out, the abracadabra that is in here about so many degrees and so many miles and so many this(es) and so many thats and several hours before the Premier could produce his map my colleague had produced his map.

I do thank the Premier but at the same time I want to give a little advertising - do the surveyors have a ban on advertising? We lawyers, in theory, do. We have to be "cleverer". We go outside the courtroom and we are supposed to tell the reporters our cases and make sure they spell the names correctly but that is not considered advertising.

AN HON. MEMBER: And it was a better map.

MR. ROBERTS: Of course it was a better map. Then again, my friend is a better surveyor.

Mr. Speaker, let me reaffirm our support on this side for the principle of redistribution. Let me state quite categorically and this is the first time that I have ever participated in any way in a redistribution exercise. The last time the seats were drawn or redrawn, whatever the phrase is, was before the 1962 election. I am not sure just what year the bill came in but sometime between the election of 1959 and the election of November 1962 the present boundaries were drawn, the boundaries constituting the districts from which the forty-two men or

forty-one men who sit in this House today, the boundaries of the districts in which they were elected.

It is the first time I have ever done it. I have never taken part in the process whether on the executive side or on the legislative side. I was feeling very pleased about it. When the Minister of Justice a year or more ago brought in the bill, we will call it, for the sake of convenience, the Redistribution Act. Its official title is; "The Electoral Boundaries Delimitation Act, 1973," but let us call it the Redistribution Act, the Act under which the commission was constituted and under which they were directed to go out and to draw a map and to draw out the boundaries.

We on this side welcomed it. I think there were those who felt perhaps we would not or that we should not. There were those who felt that somehow we should object to redistribution because, there is a myth which may or may not have an element of fact in it, it helped my party to have the districts exist as they now are. There are those who take that point of view, that it was much in the interest of the political party to which I belong to insist that the districts stay as they were.

I never agreed with that, Sir, nor did my colleagues here. In the debate on the Redistribution Act, I think we made that quite clear. We supported the principle of one man or one woman, one vote. We do believe and we did believe then and will go on believing, because we think it is correct, in a system of tolerances. That is built into the Act. The government either accepted that principle or came up with the same one, it does not matter. The principle is common ground that you do have a system of tolerances. Tolerance in out legislation and I think it is pretty standard across Canada, is twenty-five per cent above or below the quotient, the arithmetical average, the arithmetical means.

I think that makes sense. Nobody would argue that it is quite as much work to represent 10,000 people living in an urban constituency in, for example, the Constituency of St. John's South which is mixed suburb and urban. I would not call Kilbride and the Goulds part of an urban area but equally, the part of St. John's South that

lies within the city is very urban. Nobody would argue that it is quite as difficult to represent the people living in an urban as it is, for example; the gentleman, the learned and honourable gentleman from Placentia East whose district stretches over quite a distance from the Cape Shore right up to and including Long Harbour and to the Head of Placentia Bay.

There is no need to go into it in detail. The people in rural areas, it is generally agreed, turn to their members for matters which people in urban areas do not. They feel that really it is their

member's duty to look into and also of course by the very nature of the development of this Province, the needs of rural areas tend to be greater than those of urban areas, the needs for water and sewer systems and the needs for roads, the needs for improved public services and communications. These are all needed more in our rural areas than in our urban areas. Whether it should be or not and why it is so is beside the point. The fact is, it is.

The gentleman from St. Barbe South is much more concerned about roads because he has to be, than is the gentleman from Carbonear. The gentleman from Carbonear, his constituents are able, pretty well, to drive on paved roads when going about their normal activities. The gentleman from St. Barbe South, his constituents are not quite as well off except the roads which were paved by Uncle Ottawa under the DREE agreements and in the National Park. There are no paved roads, to my knowledge, in St. Barbe South.

Okay, point made. We believe in the tolerances. I think everybody in the House agreed with that. I read through the debates which took place on March 20 and March 23 back in 1973, the debate on second reading of the bill. Members on all sides supported that principle. Let me say here and now, Sir, the next Liberal administration of this Province and that is only one election away, Mr. Speaker, will insure that the districts in this Province are drawn within the tolerances on a fair and impartial basis of one person, one vote, one man, one woman, one vote. There will be none of the gerrymandering which this present bill represents.

Now, Sir, the Tories are quite gleeful over this bill. They think it is a very clever move. They think that they have somehow, Desraeli phrase, of 100 years ago was "They dished us," that they have done something well that will help them. Fine, let them think what they will. I have no concern for that for two reasons, first of all a very practical one. As a matter of academic interest, if one is to take the present breakdown it differs not greatly from the seventy-one election results or the seventy-two elections results and the percentage of seats which went Liberal and the percentage of seats which went Tory. That is the simple arithmetical exercise of taking the votes by community in those two elections and redistributing

them into the proposed electoral boundaries. It is fair enough. That is not the offence. The other point why I lose no sleep on this issue is a very much more general one, a very much more important one and that is that a government that cannot win the greater portion of a vote in a province should not be the government of the Province. I happen to think that is a principle. It can be pointed out by somebody on the other side that in 1971 the Liberal Party did not win a greater share of the vote. The Tory Party did get more votes than the Liberal Party, but when the dust had settled, it took a couple of months to settle, most of it was from St. Barbe South, but when it did settle and the gentleman from St. Barbe South was, in fact, elected and declared elected as the member for St. Barbe South, the Liberals went out of office.

So, we should have, Sir, we did not have support of the majority of the House, we did not have the support of the majority of the electorate. Usually it follows that a support of the majority of the electorate is equivalent to a support of the majority of the House. In New Brunswick the other day, apparently we saw the opposite. I gather that the Liberals got a few votes, part of a percentage vote more than did the Tories and yet the Tories under Mr. Hatfield were returned as the government. The reason for that is quite simple. It was the third party situation in, particularly the Northern seats, the French speaking seats Parti Acadian, put candidates in about thirteen seats and that had the effect of splitting the vote and allowing some Tories to be elected in districts which otherwise would have returned Liberal members. The Tory was elected with a plurality as opposed to a majority of the vote cast in the constituencies.

Generally speaking the principle of fifty per cent is pretty solid and I happen to like it. I say now that unless the candidate who will run against Your Honour can get more votes than Your Honour then that candidate should not be elected. I believe he will get more votes and he will be elected but we will put that to the hazard whenever the time comes.

Let me say as well, Mr. Speaker,

that it is time redistribution was done in this province. Since 1962 - the first election fought under the current boundaries - we have had very rapid changes in the distribution of our population. We have had a change in the number of people in the province. Even more important, we have had a change in the areas in which they live.

The District of Port au Port, Sir, which Your Honour represents, twelve years ago was well within the population boundaries of the districts in the province. Yet because of the terrific growth which has come in the Town of Stephenville, it today should be and it is proposed to make it into two separate constituencies. The people are there.

Down in the east end of St. John's here, the Pleasantville area, in 1962 had very few electors residing in it. Most of the people who lived there at that time were - well the Americans might have gone but we did not have the terrific population we have now. The whole Northeast Subdivision, the whole area across the back of St. John's, the whole area which is becoming the proposed seats of Waterford, Kenmount, Mount Scio, Pleasantville - this area had very few people in it or very many fewer people in it in 1962.

So, okay, we agree that we should have redistribution and we agree that it makes sense to do it now. That is why we welcome the original bill. That is why we will support that principle and go on doing it.

Sir, we are not going to support this resolution nor are we going to support the bill which will come from it. There are two reasons, Sir, why we will not support either the resolution or the bill. First of all, Sir, we have come to the conclusion that fifty-one M.H.A.'s is too many, that we should have forty-two M.H.A.'s, forty-two members in single member districts representing the people of this province.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, even if it were to be granted that we should have fifty-one members in this province, the present resolution does not implement the principle of an impartial commission drawing the boundaries. The boundaries in this resolution were not done by the commission headed by the late Mr. Justice Higgins with Dr. Summers of the university

and Magistrate Seabright of - where is Gordon Seabright now, Happy Valley or has he been moved - Magistrate Seabright of Happy Valley and the Reverend Mr. Webber, pastor at Wesley United Church here in St. John's as members. It was not done by them. This was done in the dark of night I venture, by we know not whom but done on the eighth floor, probably in the Premier's room or in the cabinet chamber with a little population table in one hand and probably the electoral statistics in another and a pencil and a map and a good sense of partisan glee thrown into the mixture. That is where it was done.

That is the same sort of thing, Sir, that was done in all the redistributions we have had before, back in 1834, the first members in the House and the first districts, 1854, 1884, 1885, 1889, 1925 and then the redistributions, the electoral maps since Confederation. None of them were done by an impartial commission, Sir. All of them were done by the government in power and done on a basis, I venture to say, of trying to get the greatest possible number of seats. That is what it was all done about and that is how this bill has been done.

Now, Sir, that represents a change. The Minister of Justice is not here today. I do not know where he is. I hope he is not ill or anything.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is down in Grand Bank.

MR. ROBERTS: He is down in Grand Bank. Well, he is hiding then. He has not got the face, the gall - I know, His Honour, the Governor was in Grand Bank over the weekend and may still be there for all I know. The Minister of Justice, I hope he will speak on the bill because he spoke for the government on March 20, 1973. He spoke for the government in introducing the bill setting up the commission. His words make interesting reading now, Sir, when we see how these noble band of reformers, these band of impartial patriots, these gentlemen of honor, of principle, and of concern for the best interests of the people of Newfoundland - let us look at what the honourable the Minister of Justice said.

He began

his remarks by saying, Mr. Speaker, "In rising to move second reading of this bill, the Redistribution Bill, I think that this should be regarded as somewhat of an historic occasion in this House because we are and we will, if the honourable House approves the bill, to take out of the hands of government the responsibility for setting the boundaries, and the population of the various electoral districts in the province." That is interesting. I think we should read that again, Sir. I am sorry the Premier is not here but I saw him slip by outside maybe he can hear the honeyed words of his colleague and friend, an admirer and fellow worker, colleague, the Minister of Justice, putative Chief Justice of the province, some say. God in Ottawa forbid. I may add, that the learned gentlemen opposite I think share the common view on that. Now the Premier has returned. The Premier has returned.

I was just reading to the House for the benefit of the Premier the words of his colleague, the Minister of Justice, in introducing the bill setting forth the government's position, speaking for the government, telling the people of Newfoundland how their government, the White Knights, the men in shining armour, who had vowed a blood oath to end the dirty practice of gerrymandering. What did the Minister of Justice say? Well let me read it again: "If this honourable House approves the bill", and it was approved, Sir, unanimously as it turned out, "The bill will take out of the hands of government the responsibility for setting the boundaries and the population of the various electoral districts in the province." Nice words, Sir. Words with which each of us could agree. Words with which each of us did agree. Words with which some of us still agree. But, Sir, the ministry opposite I cannot speak for their private members, they will have their opportunity and I will ensure that they have an opportunity, Sir, to declare their stand on this important principle.

The ministry opposite have thrown that principle out the window. Hypocrisy is one way to describe it. Partisanship is another. Running scared is another. The message of July 8, Hermitage, Labrador South and October, 1972, is another. There are any number of ways to describe what happened. There are any number of ways to describe the fact that the Tories marched right up to

the crunch with this principle and then backed off. Any number of ways but none of them can justify or even satisfactorily explain how this great principle, that no longer would the government draw the boundaries, this great principle would be established and enshrined in the law and in the public practice of our province.

It was a great reform. A great step forward. All over Newfoundland, Sir, people breathed easier knowing that after 140 years of government's setting boundaries, after 140 years of it, at long last we have an independent commission.

Now the Minister of Justice said some other marvelous words. We will have the opportunity to consider those at some length too. I do hope the Minister of Justice has the face to show in this House and to explain, if he can, why that principle has been abandoned. But, the principle was set down, Sir, and we voted for it. Every member of this House supported that principle. I venture to say almost every person in Newfoundland voted for that principle and supported it.

Then when the commission was appointed, we had some fears on this side. I do not mind saying so, we expressed them during the debate, about the potential for abuse. After all this is the same government that have made that gentleman Mr. Harvey Cole, a friend of mine but politically no friend of mine, the Chief Electoral Officer. That is a little like putting the fox in the chicken roost. The same administration that did that a political payoff of great cynicism and utterly inappropriate even in the type of political payoffs that have been known for this administration. We welcomed it, Sir.

Then when the Speaker appointed under the Legislation the commission we breathed easier. We felt that the Speaker had made some excellent choices the Late Mr. Justice Higgins, a man who was fair and impartial to be chairman and appointed I believe by the Chief Justice, the Honourable Chief Justice Mr. Furlong,

a man who knew politics, shall we say, inside and out, a man who had considerable experience with elections, and I might add if rumour be correct, some experience with threats or talk of gerrymandering but a man who knew the electoral system, a man of probity, of fairness, of decency, of honour and of concern for Newfoundland.

Added to him on the commission is Magistrate Seabright, a man who knows rural Newfoundland well; a gentleman who, I believe, was a welfare officer before he was - is it translated or elevated to the magistracy?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: Anyway before he became a magistrate. As a magistrate he served, I believe, in Grand Bank, on the Burin Peninsula. I first got to know him when he served as magistrate at Springdale. He now serves at Happy Valley, on the Labrador, as magistrate. He is a man, again, of impartiality, of fairness and of deep knowledge of rural Newfoundland.

Then we had the Reverend Mr. Webber, a minister at Wesley Church here in St. John's, a gentleman who achieved a great status; a man whose integrity requires him and rightly so to speak out on issues, a man who would not be part of any gerrymandering or any improper activity nor would any of the other members on that commission.

Then added on to it another man of integrity and of stature and of deep knowledge, Dr. Summers, Professor of Geography, I believe, at the university; a man who knows a very great deal about Newfoundland and about the way in which our people live and about the social and cultural and economic factors that influence their lives. These are factors, quite properly and the legislation required it, to be taken into effect in drawing district boundaries.

I think we felt easier, Sir, we felt that the principle was established and enshrined. We felt that in the hands of these men, things were in good hands. When their report came out, we looked at it eagerly. I guess every Member of the House of Assembly did. Anybody

interested in politics looked at it. Then we made some recommendations and other people did. We will come back to that. Then they made their final report, the one which, we believed, perhaps naively but genuinely, would be carried into law. Instead we are faced with this resolution which represents a gerrymandering. There is no other word to describe it. It is the old-fashioned idea of taking your little pencil and taking your little map and drawing the boundaries to try to benefit you and to hurt your enemies. Fair enough! I guess that is the prerogative of government. I am not particularly concerned. Gerrymandering cannot stop a government being defeated. It did not stop Joe Smallwood, if he gerrymandered, from being defeated. It will not stop the present government. It cannot and it will not. It cannot be done and it will not be done.

I say, without any hesitation now, that the Tories chances of getting back into government are no greater with this new electoral map. In fact they may be somewhat less. Why? Because, I think, people all over Newfoundland feel that fifty-one M.R.A.'s are too many. I think right-thinking people all over Newfoundland feel equally -

AN HON. MEMBER: Forty-two is too many.

MR. ROBERTS: Well if the cap fits, those on each side should feel free to wear it.

MR. DOODY: I will get one. The leadership convention is over.

MR. ROBERTS: Ours is, yours, Sir, is yet to come.

The people all over Newfoundland, Sir, right-thinking people, people who are concerned with this, are disturbed and angry and upset. They are not out rioting in the streets. There has been no meeting in Northeast Crouse recently to pass a motion at a public meeting to the effect that the government should be censured because they have not adopted the report of the independent commission because they have abandoned this principle. But, Sir, right-thinking people all over Newfoundland, people who believe genuinely that the Tories might do something

that most politicians do not, that is to live up to their promises and their commitments. People all over Newfoundland are disillusioned, disappointed, shocked and upset. It is probably the greatest boost that my party has had all week. We get a lot of boosts these days from a lot of people.

I am going to be very interested to hear the gentleman from St. John's South, the gentleman from Placentia East and other honourable gentlemen, who are not in the cabinet, describe their feelings. I would like to hear them say whether they support this abandonment of the principle because the principle is clear, Sir. The Minister of Justice, speaking for the government, laid it down. The principle is that an independent commission shall draw the boundaries. There are very few weasel words, very few.

"Mr. Speaker, (The Minister of Justice speaking) I would suggest to this honourable House that no responsible minister and no responsible commission would tolerate nor would it be possible for there to be any change in any report that comes from the commission." The Member for Burin, Sir, speaking on March 20, 1973. A little further down he weasled just a little, teensy, weensy bit. I will find the reference in due course. He said that it would take compelling reasons or something like that to change it.

I will prove, quite conclusively, that the Premier was unable to find any compelling reasons. There may have been some but, if so, he was not able to find them at all.

I will be interested to hear people, who stand by principle, openly and honourably, explain how they can countenance setting up a commission, impartial, men of stature and integrity, men of knowledge and experience, not political hacks. Jim Higgins, Bill Summers, Ralph Webber and Gordon Seabright are not political hacks. Each party has political hacks, Sir. It is a fact of political life. These men do not fall under that Rubicon - setting them up, letting them go through the exercise for

twelve months, of having a hearing in twenty-two or twenty-three places throughout the province, briefs being received from thirty, forty or fifty individuals in groups, presenting two reports, a preliminary one and a final one, then having it dished and dished on the eighth floor of Confederation Building.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear men speak to that principle. They will have the opportunity to do so. They will have the opportunity to record their votes: The gentleman from St. John's North, the gentleman from Grand Falls, the gentleman from Port de Grave, the gentleman from Harbour Grace, the gentleman from Bonavista South, the gentleman from Bay de Verde, the gentleman from Trinity North . I suppose he is neither in the cabinet nor out of it. Well that is not parliamentary, I will not say that. I have named every backbencher in the House at present.

The ministers, I take it none of them have left the cabinet over this, can be taken to have changed their minds and, Sir, they now abandon this principle of an impartial commission. That is gone now. That is gone along with public tender. That is gone along with public tender. That is gone along with planning and priorities. That is gone along with all the other things that the Tories used to talk about but do not anymore. That is gone now. It is swept under the rug and into the ash can and history. You can forget about that now. We forget about that particular reform. The commission was set up. It did its work and for no reason at all, except maybe a little electoral expediency, we are going to abandon it. So be it! The people of Newfoundland have noted this, Sir. The people of Newfoundland know full well what happened. They shall not forget it, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, let me leave that fertile subject for a moment or two, I will come back to it. There are one or two words yet to be said. Let me speak on the question of the size of the membership of this House. Let me say right at the start that we have

changed our minds. If Your Honour wished to devote an hour or so this evening instead of watching Wojack or whatever happens to come on television tonight and happens to tickle, Your Honour's television fancy, if Your Honour were to take an hour or so and to cuddle up in front of the fire with the Hansards, Your Honour would find that when we spoke in the House, in 1973, we said that we thought the size of the House should be increased to fifty-one. So we did. We have changed our mind. We now think that fifty-one is too many. I say to the government that I implore them to change their mind on this issue, to admit that what seemed right and appropriate a year and one-half ago is not right and appropriate now. We think, Sir, that the House should be redistributed on the basis of forty-two seats, forty-two single member seats. We think the commission should be instructed to get back - it would have to be reconstituted - Mr. Justice Higgins, of course, died in the interim. There should be a new chairman appointed. I think Mr. Webber and Mr. Seabright and Dr. Summers are admirable choices, up to the Speaker. They should be told to get cracking and to bring in a bill with forty-two seats. It would only be a couple of weeks work at the most. The House could tell them to bring it back by the end of December or by the middle of January.

Mr. Speaker, if the Premier is so all-fired anxious to have it put through, if it is such a great priority, then let us do it. The House can meet any time in the new year. It can meet any time the Premier and the government want it to. We do not even have to prorogue this session. We do not even have to have the formality of an official opening with the Speech from the Throne and the debate on the Address in Reply and all those things. If it is so all-fired urgent, if all business of the public of Newfoundland must stand aside, until we clean up the question of redistribution, then let us get cracking at it. It will not take long. After all the government have had the report now, The final report of the commission

was submitted - there is a date on it somewhere, always a date on these things - December 14, 1973, nearly a year ago. The government have had that report in the Speech from the Throne which opened this session, ten months ago. The government announced with great solemnity that there would be legislation laid before us. It took them ten months to get it laid before us and now all of the sudden it is a priority.

Maybe it means we are going to have an election. I hope so. I would dearly love an election now. I must admit I am being very selfish in that. The Premier looks quizzically at me. I will even give the Premier a lift down to Government House if he would like to call upon His Honour the Governor and advise a dissolution. Nothing would give me more pleasure, nothing would give this party more pleasure, nothing would give the people of Newfoundland and Labrador more pleasure than an immediate dissolution. We have just got time, Sir, to sneak it in before Christmas. Polling day would be Christmas Eve. What a present that would be for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, Sir, what a merry Christmas it would be in Newfoundland and Labrador, what a merry Christmas it would be and what a happy and prosperous New Year it would be because the Tories, Sir, would have got the royal order of the boot. I am all for that.

Anyway, Sir, I do not think that this legislation is that all-fired important that it cannot wait six weeks for the commission to sit and to redraw on the basis of forty-two. They have been through it. They know the considerations. They know the population figures, They know the combinations that can be made and cannot be made. They fittered around on the map. They have jiggled around. They know the province. They know the considerations that are taken into effect. It would not take them very long to do it.

Then we would only have forty-two M.H.A.'s. We would save the province \$130,000 a year in salaries to begin with. Not a lot of money I agree. We are spending three quarters of a billion dollars this year in round numbers. \$130,000 is not a lot of money, no but, Mr. Speaker, it is money we do not need to spend. Whether we are spending \$750 million or \$750 billion, we surely do not have any to waste.

I heard on the radio today, Mr. Francis MacDonald from the Goulds or Kilbride, saying that the whole milk industry is on the verge of going

under. Most of that is down in the Kilbride, Goulds area, the St. John's South District because the cost of feed is going up and the cost of everything else is going up and although the price of milk has risen, it apparently has not risen enough.

We have \$130,000 a year to fling around. I would rather put it into subsidizing milk than I would into subsidizing an extra nine M.H.A.'s. I would rather put it into extra police in St. John's. I would rather put it towards subsidies for trawler fishermen that are going to come. I could name at least 1,000 items of public expenditure, Mr. Speaker, which should have and in the eyes of the people of Newfoundland, do have a greater priority and a greater claim on public funds than an extra nine M.H.A.'s. Indeed, Sir, I suspect if we were to take a poll across the province or have a referendum across the province, we would find that most Newfoundlanders probably think that forty-two M.H.A.'s is too many.

Let us look across Canada, Sir. Just look at the figures across Canada. We take it on the basis of population per member. We start out in Saskatchewan. It is a nice place to start, Saskatchewan.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: All right, we will start in British Columbia if the honourable gentleman feels that his mind can only grasp things in order of that type. We will do it. Let us start in British Columbia. The estimated population of British Columbia in July of this year - that is the most recent figures that Statistics Canada can provide - was 2,402,000 people. They have at present in that legislature fifty-five members. Interesting enough not all of them are in single member districts. There are seven dual member districts in that legislature.

The population per member in British Columbia is 44,000 or if the gentleman from Green Bay wishes to try it out, it is 43,672. Let us call it 44,000 rounding it up or down to the nearest thousand. That is British Columbia, 44,000.

Alberta had 1,717,000 people and it had seventy-five members each of whom represented a single seat constituency. That gives you 23,000 per constituency and per member, 23,000.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: How does the honourable member relate that to geography?

MR. ROBERTS: How do I relate it to geography? How do I relate the price of fish to the honourable gentleman's salary? I do not but I could tell the honourable gentleman a lot of people in Green Bay do.

The next province coming east for the benefit of honourable gentlemen who do not know including the gentleman from Green Bay, I fear, is Saskatchewan, 908,000 people. They have sixty members. That gives you 15,000 people per member.

Then we come into Manitoba, 1,012,000. Fifty-seven members in the Manitoba House and 18,750 is the quotient, 17,750-18,000 people.

The next province, of course, is Ontario, 117 members, the largest provincial legislature, the largest province, 8.1 million people. That gives them 69,000 people per member, 69,000 men, women and children in Ontario on the average, on the arithmetical average, elect a member to the Ontario legislature, their provincial parliament as they call it.

The National Assembly of Quebec has 110 members of whom 102 are Liberals and eight are others. I am sorry 101, they lost the by-election. There are nine in opposition now. In Quebec 110 members represent 6 million people, 6.1 million people as of July, 1974. That gives you 56,000 per member.

The next province coming down, of course, is New Brunswick, 663,000 people, 58 members, 11,400 per member.

Then you come into Prince Edward Island which has thirty-two members for 117,000. That gives them 3,700 per member. The smallest by the way, needless to say, the smallest number.

We have Nova Scotia which has forty-six members representing forty-three seats for 814,000 people. They have 17,700 people per member.

So, Mr. Speaker, you can see across Canada there is quite a variation. The lowest, leaving aside Prince Edward Island - in Prince Edward Island, I might point out, that with 100,000 people, they have got to elect a legislature of at least twenty-five or thirty people. So,

I do not think that figure is particularly relevant, the 3,600 figure here. The lowest next to us is New Brunswick with 11,400 people.

In Newfoundland, Sir, if we stick with the fifty-one, if the government proceed with this ill-advised course, you will have 10,647 people per electoral district. The population of Newfoundland is 543,000 according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics now called Statistics Canada as of July, 1974. Well, interesting enough the government's figures on redistribution only add up to 514,000 people. There are 30,000 people lost somewhere.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, we do not need fifty-one M.H.A.'s. If we stick with the forty-two, we have 13,000 people per member. That is well within the - I am sorry?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: I do not know if we voted for it or not. I have changed my mind. I implore the honourable gentleman to admit that he too can change his mind. It takes a man of some intelligence and some courage to change his mind. So, I say to the honourable gentleman, I expect him to change his mind. One should never be afraid to admit that one has made a mistake.

The people in Newfoundland are not afraid to admit them. Ask them in Bonavista, Trinity, Conception. Ask them in Grand Falls, White Bay, Labrador. Ask them in Hermitage. Ask them in Gander Twillingate. Let us ask them throughout this province and we will get the answer.

I said to the honourable gentleman - the honourable gentleman from Bonavista South may not have been in his seat, he may have been about his lawful concerns elsewhere - we changed our mind. We do, you know. We do change our minds once in a while. What is wrong with that? We do not think that Newfoundland needs fifty-one M.H.A.'s. We think forty-two men and women could adequately represent the people of this province and can speak for us and can decide the issues.

In an age when all we hear is the rising cost of government, and we hear on every hand the concern with the growing costs, why cannot we in this legislature take a stand. Forty-two is enough, forty-two people

have governed this province, forty-two people made up the present government, the House of forty-two. Why the magic number of fifty-one? I will tell you why, Mr. Speaker. The only reason that there are fifty-one members being proposed is to try to justify the swollen size of the present ministry. That is the only reason. That is the reason that fifty-one was chosen. It was not a matter of throwing dice or of consulting the entrails or of ringing up Zolar or reading the Horoscope in the "Daily News" or the "Evening Telegram" or "The Amazing Kreskin" on the television. No, Sir. Fifty-one to justify a swollen cabinet.

The Premier had the gall - I suppose he had to defend it although I have never heard a speech with less enthusiasm and less belief in it than his speech on Friday on this bill, this resolution. The Premier said that you cannot govern Newfoundland with fewer than nineteen ministers. That is what we have today, nineteen ministers. Well, I say we are governing Newfoundland with far fewer ministers than we have today because if they were paid by the hour, Sir, half of them would not even get the minimum wage. Everybody in Newfoundland knows at least half the present cabinet have not done a days work in any given week since they were sworn into office. There are some who work hard. I would be the first to admit it. I think the Minister of Fisheries works very hard. He might not achieve very much but he works very hard. I will give him full credit.

There are one or two others I could name who punch in a days work but most of them, Sir, have no more idea of what a days work is than they do about what the moon is made of. We do not need fifty-one, Sir. It is an insult to say that we do. It is only an attempt to justify the swollen size of the cabinet. The cabinet is too large. I would think that next to Ontario and Quebec and

Ottawa, we have the largest Cabinet in Canada. Nova Scotia under both a Tory premier and a Liberal premier manages to get by very accurately with fewer ministers than we have. Even Ottawa governing 22 million Canadians only has twenty-seven or twenty-eight ministers, twenty-eight. Ontario and Quebec with 6 millions of people in one and 8 millions of population in the other do not have cabinets proportionally a great deal larger than ours. They have nineteen. Nineteen. I suppose when we get fifty-one in the House we will probably have about twenty-five in the Cabinet. I say far better to reduce the size of the Cabinet. There is no reason in the world that Newfoundland cannot be governed adequately with twelve, thirteen, fourteen or fifteen ministers who work. They are carrying a number of angishores, the present Cabinet is, then obviously you are going to need more.

The only reason that I can see why the government have seized on this magic figure of fifty-one and the Premier did not say this in so many words but he did say it in fact the other day when he talked about the need to have a backbench. Well I say the way to get a backbench is to put people out of the Cabinet or not ask as many in or do what Mr. Trudeau apparently is doing, sort of rotate people through the Cabinet. They will be in for a couple of years and they will be out for a couple of years, great system. I do not know if it will work, I must say, but it is a great system anyway, in theory. I have my doubts and I think the Premier does too as to whether that type of thing really is terribly practical in the Canadian context.

The fact remains though that our Cabinet is too large and that now to add insult to the injury of too large a Cabinet we are now going to be asked to approve too large a House. I say to the government that we have changed our minds on it and I would ask them to change their mind. No harm is done. Nobody in Newfoundland will vote against them because they have changed their mind. I do not know of anybody in Newfoundland other than some gentlemen on the other side and maybe the people who make election material who will obviously do better because there is more material to be bought, I do not know of anybody who thinks we need fifty-one M.H.A.s. I do not know of one voice that has been raised anywhere in this Province

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Tape 1816

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to demand fifty-one M.H.A.s, not one, not a single voice, right from Cape Race to Cape Chidly and all the way down to Cape Ray and come across the southwest coast again to Cape Race. So, why do we not have forty-two? Refer it back to the commission. Appoint a new Chairman. It will be hard to find a man as well qualified as Jim Higgins but there are men. None of us is indispensable. Men can do the job. Maybe one of the present commissioners could become Chairman and then a fourth commissioner could be appointed. Give them six weeks. That is long enough. They have done all of the spade work. They know the ins and outs of it now. They have mastered the

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subject. Indeed I think either their first or second reports can be considered a masterpiece of dealing with a difficult subject and coming the grips of it. Give them six weeks so that when we come back in the new year, if it is urgent to deal with this business, if all other matters should stand aside, if the cost of living and the fishery and the need for improved services and the need for economic development and the second refinery and the Lower Churchill, if all of that should stand aside to deal with redistribution then let us deal with it in the new year. What is the urgency? If we are going to have an election before Christmas let us have that. I doubt if we are. I hope we are.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: St. Patrick's Day.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, maybe St. Patrick's Day. It would be a great day, a great day for the Irish, O'Roberts, O'Neary, O'Thoms, O'Rowe, O'Simmons, O'Winsor, O'Gillette, O'Woodward and "O" everybody else. It would be a great day for the Irish. Ank could wear his green for envy.

Now, Sir, -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: I mean the eight of us, maybe nine, if the honourable gentleman from Labrador South comes to the conclusion that we are on the right side of the issue, if he agrees with our position, the nine of us are not going to outvote the thirty or thirty-one on the other side who vote. Your Honour, although I have no doubt in realizing Your Honour is on the other side, Your Honour does not vote in the House, a wise thing. As a rule, Your Honour can vote when he wishes of course but I just asked the government to change their minds. No harm would be done to do it. Nothing would be lost. Public interest would be helped, not hurt. We only have forty-two M.H.A.s and that is enough. There are those who suggest we go smaller than that. That could be done too but I suspect that if we go much smaller than that the House much smaller than that, we would end up in the rural areas with very, very unmanageable districts.

With forty-two, the districts would be manageable. It would certainly mean that some districts would be moved from the rural areas into the urban areas. Balance has to be changed. My friend in St. Barbe North has 2,500 electors. St. Mary's has about 4,000, no, under 3,000. Labrador South, I

think, 2,200. There might be some justification in the case of Labrador. That is in the legislation. But these rural areas, the districts would have to be made a little larger even with tolerances. But I still think we would have districts that are workable. There would be no district that is any larger or any more difficult than the proposed Baie Verte-White Bay District or the proposed Straits of Bell Isle District.

I am a little sensitive about those because they affect my own seat and I do not want to seem to be pleading on a special cause. I am not the least bit concerned how the government draw the boundaries on the Northern Peninsula. I think I made it on Placentia West. The only problem is I would have to ask about twenty people to stand aside.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: I have already gone through a leadership convention which is more than I can say of the honourable gentleman opposite.

I have done the one thing the honourable gentleman has not. The Minister of Fisheries could not for all the money he spent, could not do it.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, maybe he knew him too well. I do not know. Maybe Jameison knew the honourable gentleman too well. That could be too.

MR. CROSIBE: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: Right, right, but I have not, Mr. Speaker, I have not lost. The honourable the Minister of Fisheries - I have not lost and the honourable Minister of Fisheries has lost and is losing each day. He is sitting over there trying to put the best foot on it and the best fact on it but he is sitting there every day.

MR. CROSIBE: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: But still, he did beat the honourable gentleman opposite.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the House of forty-two is large enough, perfectly large enough. The seats; there would obviously need to be some change in the boundaries and so there should be. We would still end up with perfectly manageable and perfectly workable seats, seats which men or women could adequately represent the feelings of their constituents and in turn could adequately attend to the requests and the needs of their constituents.

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Tape 1817

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We would not be saddling Newfoundland with fifty-one M.H.A.s. Who was it, was it F. E. Smith who said that Newfoundland has the trappings of an elephant on the back of a mouse and he became Lord Chancellor of England at one stage, several times as a matter of fact, Lord Burkingham he then became, but some Englishman poking sport at we poor Colonials

a number of years ago. They called him Galloper Smith. A number of years ago some Englishman poking fun at we Colonials here in Newfoundland said that Newfoundland has the trappings of an elephant on the back of a mouse. Well fifty-one M.H.A.s and nineteen ministers is exactly that, the trappings of an elephant on the back of a mouse and a pretty undernourished mouse these days.

Mr. Speaker, let me say a few words about the resolution now. I mean all of this is just by way of introduction and by way of getting used to speaking in the House. It has been six months laying off. There are a few remarks which I would make and although I do not propose to go through that map as the Premier did, Sir, I wonder if we could, it might make it easier unless honourable gentlemen opposite are all familiar with the layout of the new district, it might make it easier if that lovely, gorgeous, coloured chart could be trotted back on to the floor of the House. I have one here but it has not got the lovely colours on it, Sir.

Now, Sir, first of all, I looked up, I have always wondered what gerrymander meant. I know where it came from. I know what it meant and the Premier might like to know because of course his name will be entered into this book now, gerrymander is defined as "drawing of political lines by the party in power so as to perpetuate its power, designating a district to fit its voting pattern." I do not know if it is shocking or not. I feel it is shocking but I find it interesting that the Tories who used to parade their virtue as a woman, no, that is not parliamentary. I bit my tongue on that one. Anyway the gentlemen opposite who used to parade their virtue have now become street walkers and have sold their virtue for a mess of political potage. The term is derived from the name of the governor of Massachusetts in 1811, one named Elbridge Gerry, a great name, imagine naming your child Elbridge, Elbridge Gerry.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: The honourable member just lost a vote.

MR. ROBERTS: It wipes out the Elbridge vote, does it not and I lost the golf course vote in Grand Falls too because I do not think the government should have put \$150,000 into that golf course to the west of Grand Falls.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Bide Arm.

MR. ROBERTS: Bide Arm. I am losing Bide Arm. That is one of the things that is happening in redistribution. Some fortunate M.H.A. will have the glory of representing Bide Arm, coming at me from all directions, all directions.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Where is it going?

MR. ROBERTS: It is going in with Baie Verte and White Bay. What do they now call it? Baie Verte-White Bay they are going to call the new district.

Anyway, Governor Gerry was the one who came up with that and gerrymandering has created such odd looking districts as the monkey wrench district of Iowa, the dumb bell district of Pennsylvania, the horse shoe of New York, the shoe string district of Mississippi and I might add St. John's West in the Provincial House of Assembly, I think, falls under the category of oddly shaped district. It says for a modern use of the ancient technique see (f) frankly the Newfoundland House of Assembly in 1974.

So we now have more or less another example of gerrymandering. The government ignored the commission's report completely. They ignored both reports. The legislation required the Speaker to appoint a commission and required that commission to make a preliminary report and to make it publicly and then to hold hearings throughout the Province. This they did Sir. They made their public report. I do not know if there is a date on it or not. There is a copy of it here. The 24th day of August, 1973 the report was made public and then the commission held hearings. They planned to hold them at eighteen places throughout the Province. I think they may have held them in fewer places because of the fact that no people chose to come forward in some areas. Then they made a final report which was dated December 14, 1973. They held public hearings, Sir, at Happy Valley, Wabush, Stephenville, Corner Brook, Bonne Bay, Port Aux Basques, St. Anthony, Grand Falls, Gander, Glovertown, Clarendville, Marystown, Grand Bank, Burin, Harbour Grace, Placentia, Calvert and St. John's.

They received briefs from forty-three separate individuals or organizations. After hearing those briefs, after considering their preliminary report and after hearing the objections on them, the commission then brought in their final report. I do not know if it was ever printed but certainly it was typed and mimeographed and photostated and so forth and all members have a copy of it. We have a copy of the map. The Member for Bonavista North drew one up for us. It is widely known what the map looks like. It did not look a great deal like the map here. It did in some areas and it did not in others.

Now what is the significance of the commission's report, Mr. Speaker? Well let us once again consult with that oracle of principle, that paragon of rectitude and, of course, I speak of the Minister of Justice. It would do the gentleman from Placentia East, well, not to snicker, when I speak of the Minister of Justice like that. I do speak of the Minister of Justice. I would submit that there is nobody else in this House who could be called a paragon of principle on this matter.

I refer to that marvelous debate where the Minister of Justice told us of the great reform. The reform for which he and his colleagues had fought and bled from one end of this province to the other; a reform which was to enshrine their names in the political history of this province. Gerrymandering would be struck from the dictionary in Newfoundland and we would have Hickmanitis put in to replace it. This same gentleman, the Minister of Justice, still sits in the cabinet, Sir, has still accepted this resolution and the bill to follow. Indeed for all I know, he may have drawn it up but certainly under the principle of collective responsibility, which is part and parcel of it. What did he have to say, Sir, about the procedure which would lead to a new electoral redistribution? I have already read but I think it is worth reading again, Sir, the marvelous opening words where he summarized and then capulated his argument.

"Mr. Speaker, in rising to move second reading of this bill, I think this should be regarded as somewhat of an historic occasion in this House because we are and we will, if this honourable House approves the bill, take out of the hands of government, the responsibility for setting the boundaries and the population of the various electoral districts in the province." That was the principle. He went on, Sir, a little later on, a few minutes on in the debate. "Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to this honourable House that no responsible minister and no responsible commission would tolerate nor would it be possible for there to be any change in any report that comes from the commission." He is referring specifically to the tabling of the report, Sir. He says that there should be no change.

Now here we go, Sir. This is the same debate, of course. It is page 2347 for those who wish to read along. "Today we find that people are no longer happy over the prospects of the government of the day, with the majority in the House, sitting down and carefully calculating what number of seats would be in their best interest." Can that be the same honourable gentleman who still sits in the cabinet in view of this? Of all the hypocritical, two-faced - the whole government - he spoke for the government. He spoke for every honourable gentleman opposite who supported it. He spoke for us but the difference is that we have not changed our minds.

"Today we find that people are no longer happy over the prospects of the government of the day, with the majority in the House, sitting down and carefully calculating what number of seats would be in their best interest and how boundaries would be adjusted in order to suit voting patterns throughout the particular jurisdiction over which that particular parliament governs.

"I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation will convince the people of Newfoundland that we, as a government, that we, as a House of Assembly, (The ringing declarations of a man who once had principle) are determined once and for all to do away with

any suggestions that there can be any gerrymandering insofar as electoral boundaries are concerned and voting patterns in this Province of Newfoundland." Page 2347 of the Hansard, ringing words of principle, from a man of principle, from a government of principle. All of it, Sir, in the crunch, is of about as much value as that which is sometimes found under fish flakes at

the end of a long hot season. malodorous, odoriferous mess. A group of men formerly men of principle. The whole Island, Sir, the whole province now knows what sort of principle this government now stand for. I do not care how the boundaries are laid out. You can argue one way or another and I will deal with the Premier's futile and weak and puny little arguments. You think the priced staff he has got could provide him with better than that.

But the principle, Sir, is that either you have an independent commission set those boundaries or you do not. This government told this House and the people of this province clearly and unequivocally that they would have an independent commission set those boundaries. They set up the commission. They played the charade through. The commission went all the way - how do you think the commission would feel now? I cannot speak for Mr. Justice Higgins, nobody can, but I wonder if anybody has asked Mr. Ralph Webber and Bill Summers and Gordon Seabright whether they would have gone through that exercise, if they had realized that at the end of it the Premier and his colleagues and political advisers would closet themselves somewhere down on the eight floor and would draw up the little lines. They have been tricked and treated shamefully. They might have not done their work at all for the result of that. They had their preliminary report. They presented it. They followed the legislation. They followed the dictates of the legislation faithfully. They held the hearings.

You know, Your Honour, this seat is probably illegal under the present act. That shows how much concern the Minister of Justice and the House Leader and the Minister of Fisheries and the Premier and the whole crowd of them have, they have abandoned their principle, Sir, why? Because they know what is going to happen with an election and this is a feeble and a futile attempt, a desperate attempt by desperate men to try. It will not work. It did not work for Joe Smallwood when the tide went out. It did not work for us nor should it. It will not work for this crowd.

Let me just read that quote again, Sir, This was the minister introducing the bill in behalf of the government. Speaking for the government, no minister rose to contradict him, several others including the Premier rose to speak in support of it. These are the words: bound and shined on page 2347 of Hansard, the place where the Tories admitted once again, clearly

beyond any doubt the principle is a dispensable item with them. They have the same principle as inmate of any brodello. Today we find that people - (It is the Minister of Justice now). Today we find that people are no longer happy over the prospects of government of the day, with the majority in the House sitting down and carefully calculating what number of seats would be in their best interest, and how boundaries should be adjusted in order to suit voting patterns throughout the particular jurisdiction over which that particular parliament governs.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation will convince the people of Newfoundland that we, as the government, and that we as a House of Assembly are determined once and for all to do away with any suggestion that there can be gerrymandering insofar as the electoral boundaries are concerned and voting patterns in this Province of Newfoundland.

It is pretty clear. Words you could hail. The gentleman for White Bay South led for us in the debate. He spoke and he hailed those words, in that speech. Other honourable gentlemen spoke. It was a step forward. Whatever the results might have been in an electoral consequences, it was a step forward and a great step forward. We saw how long it lasted though.

The commission. Busy men, much to do in their private lives and their public careers. It takes several weeks and several months to travel around the province, hold hearings, people prepare briefs and all of it ended up in the waste basket down on the eighth floor. We get this. We get that. That is not even the commission's first recommendations. It is closer to that than it is to the second.

It goes on, Sir. There are some other gems in here. There are some other gems in here that the Minister of Justice spoke of.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: Well he will need a prayer meeting, if the man has any character, any political character, political principle he will resign this day but I do not expect him to do that. I do not expect anything at all from him on that.

On page 2358, Sir - the minister is coming to the conclusion of his Magna Carta. There are some other references but they refer to individual areas. We will have the pleasure of hearing those.

The minister is coming to the end now. He has made his ringing declaration of principle. Sir, the Magna Carta stands in the shade compared to that great declaration the minister made in that speech. The Declaration of Independence in the United States of America for which men fought and died means little set beside that. The Bill of Rights in England, the Declaration of the aims of the French Revolution, Sir, all of these fall into insignificance compared to the mountain of principle on which the minister took his stand, armed with the shield of righteousness and the whole government there beside him, Sir, ready to fight to the death, blood up to their knees for this principle of an impartial commission. Take it out of the hands of the government, the dirty Liberals have done that. Joey Smallwood who only won six elections did that. Oh, the dirty little fellows. We will not have any more of that in Newfoundland. We are pure. We do not make any deals with Trizec without tenders, oh, no. We do not make any deals with Craig Dobbin without tenders, no, not us. No, we do not do anything like that, no. We are pure. Purity, a negotiable instrument in the hands of the honourable gentlemen opposite.

Anyway, the Minister of Justice, I can just picture him, Patrick Henry, Patrick Henry who said, "Give me liberty or give me death." Well, the Minister of Justice stood and he said much the same thing, Sir, the same sort of ringing principle. Page 2358 and the honourable gentleman would like to take it home with him tonight, "It is our hope." Now "our" Sir, does not refer to the district of Burin nor I venture to suggest to the Newfoundland Law Society nor to St. James United Church nor to the residents of Carpasian Road nor any of these groups with which the honourable gentleman is associated. "Our" can be taken to refer to only one thing in this context, "our" we, the government of Newfoundland, the Premier and the ministry, we, us, "It is our hope," Mr. Speaker, said the Minister of Justice, "that this bill will commend itself to honourable members," and it did. His hope was justified.

I think every honourable member voted for it. I do not know if there was a recorded vote or not. But if there was everybody voted for it. Certainly everybody who was in the House. If I was here I voted for it.

If I was not here I would have voted for it.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: Right, we did. We are men enough to admit it and we are men enough to admit that things now should be changed and I hope the honourable gentleman equally has some manliness left in him.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: It will. "It will I am convinced, not dramatically." That is what it said. Well, let me clean up the honourable gentleman's syntax for him. "It will convince and provide a very rational, totally impartial formula for arriving at the electoral boundaries of the districts to this Province, that it will result in more meaningful representation in the House, not in the sense of the capabilities of those who are presently serving here but rather, Mr. Speaker, it will spread the work load a bit more evenly insofar as members are concerned. It will hopefully have honourable members in this House who represent areas where there is a community of interest and where their geographic considerations have also been discussed and considered by the commission Ah ha! By the commission as if somehow they would have something to do with it.

It would lead a fair minded person hearing that to believe: Why is that Commission without something to do with it? The Commission, Sir, might as well never have sat. It was a waste of breath for Your Honour to name a Commission. It was a waste of ink for Your Honour to sign a letter that appointed a member to a commission. It was a waste of time, money, effort, skill, devotion for the late Mr. Justice Higgins or any of the other members of that Commission to do anything on this report, a complete waste of time. They might as well have telephoned and said, "Frank, will you tell us how you are going to do it? We will just save everybody a lot of fuss and bother."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice went on. I will begin the sentence again. I do not want to lose the continuity of his great thought, "It will hopefully have honourable members in this House who represent areas where there is a community of interest and where their

geographic considerations have also been discussed such as going from Roddickton three hundred or four hundred miles over to Baie Verte. That is a great geographic consideration. That is just marvellous. It would be closer for them to go to Port Aux Basques than it would to go to Baie Verte.

Anyway, the Minister of Justice, this was before a principle was no longer relevant, before the government abandoned their principles, "It will hopefully have honourable members in this House who represent areas where there is a community of interest and where their geographic considerations have also been discussed and considered by the commission and they will once and for all, Mr. Speaker, free from the minds of the voters and indeed the population of this Province

any suspicion that the government of the day can tamper with electoral boundaries to serve their own ends. This will not be possible under this bill. If this bill is carried it will not be possible in the future. Oh! foolish virgins we were. Oh! how stund we were to believe the Minister of Justice and the government.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice was not the only one. It might have been thought that he may have been off on a lark of his own, that he might have just been off - as he sometimes does - he goes off into his own little world. He was standing in the House, honourable members opposite heard him, the ministry were here but nobody spoke against it.

A little later in the debate we even achieved that rarity. The Premier not only appeared in the House, which in itself is rare enough, but he spoke. He actually spoke.

MR. NEARY: The goat spoke in Mobile.

MR. ROBERTS: He spoke and it was really so overwhelming to those of us who heard and believed - we have this terribly naiveté, we believed the Minister of Justice and the Premier. We tend to believe all honourable gentlemen opposite when they say a fact is a fact or that this is their opinion. Maybe I should say we used to. Better let me quote, Sir, the honeyed words of the Premier as found on page 2590 of everybody's favourite bedside reading, "HANSARD."

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROBERTS: "The past government, Sir, could be blamed, I think, for some legitimacy (whatever that might mean in that context) of gerrymandering seats which I do not think should ever happen again in this province." Just like the Minister of Justice. They said the same thing, they really did. They obviously were of one mind. The Premier went on: "I think the objective of what we are trying to do here is to really do well and give people the representation that they themselves know is just."

Mr. Speaker, it is astonishing. It is incredible. It is the greatest - it is a great reversal of principle. We can go through this debate (I hope a number of honourable members will

speak and I suspect several will) and we can talk about the individual boundaries of a given district aye or nay. I shall make a few comments because I think that there are one or two points that should be made. I want it clearly understood, Sir, that I make my comments strictly because the government are apparently committed to throw principle to the winds. The principle of an impartial commission is gone, gone forever, and all the people of Newfoundland who believed the Tories had some honour and that they were not as other politicians are supposed to be, men who would do anything to get elected or re-elected, all that belief is gone.

Let me say that our main stand, Sir, is twofold. We think forty-two is enough and fifty-one is too many and we think that it should be done by an impartial commission within the tolerances of the sort of legislation we have now.

We have to talk about the detailed districts because if the government will not retrieve their tattered honour and will not do the right and proper thing and refer it back to a commission, then this will be the electoral map. We shall fight under it and we shall win the election under it. If we do not win the election under it, so be it. No one will complain, no whining, no problem there.

I do not care how they carve up the seats, Sir, there are going to be more people support the Liberal Party in this province in the next election than support the Tories and that means the Liberals will win the election. If that is so then they should win the election and if it is not, then they should not. It does not matter how the seats are. It does not really. I am not suggesting for one moment that we go to proportional representation. It does not work in the parliamentary system but there is a very good correlation between the number of seats a party gets over any history be it Newfoundland or Canada or anywhere and the percentage of the vote it gets.

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Now, Sir, the government the report of the commission and one could hear the scurrying start then. This resolution is the result of that process. The government threw aside the commission's final report. They may or may not have read it. I have no way of knowing what they did or did not do

but they obviously threw it aside. They took two decisions. There are, I think, fundamentally, two basic changes in this document - well, three I should say - from the final report of the committee. I can think of four. Let me start in the south first.

The government decided to reject the commission's recommendation to have the seat called, Conception-Salmonier - instead they resurrected a seat which they have chosen to call, St. Mary's - the Capes or the Capes - St. Mary's, which by the way, I think, is a very nice name. I do approve wholeheartedly of at least that. It is much more euphonious and, I believe, much more historical than Salmonier-Conception. If names were the only criterion, then well and good. That did not produce an extra seat on the Avalon, just a reshuffling of the boundaries.

The government then decided to take a seat from the Northern Peninsula, which meant that the three Northern Peninsula seats are all over the medium, over the arithmetical means, and put that extra seat down in Trinity Bay. Under the commission's final report, Mr. Speaker, there were - if one wants to start at the seat they called Bonavista South, which is a little larger than the present proposed Bonavista South, there was the seat of Bonavista South, the seat of Clarendville, the seat of Trinity and the seat of Carbonear, Bay de Verde. I think that that is a correct description. I have not got that map in front of me at this moment. The government have chosen to add a fifth seat to that part of the province. They have made the Terra Nova District a little larger and they have added some of the things out of the proposed Port de Grave back into the proposed Belleuve seat. But basically, leaving aside some jiggers and taggers, they have moved a seat from the Northern Peninsula down to here.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: I am sorry?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, I am sorry. They have made Terra Nova a little smaller. Okay. That is right. Bonavista South was made considerably smaller. The commission's final report recommended that Port Union, Catalina and Trinity, I believe, maybe Goose Cove, Trouty and Bonaventure, go in with the so-called Bonavista South seat. Terra Nova, I believe, came down to Harcourt, Monroe on the north shore of Smith's Sound here, across from Random Island. That was the second change which the commission made.

The third change which the government made was to take a seat from the Northern Peninsula.

The fourth change was to re-orient completely the boundaries of the two Eastern Labrador seats. One thing in common throughout all three exercises, I believe, (I have to have the exact maps here) and I think it is correct is that throughout the three, Labrador West or Menibek, as it is now called, remain unchanged. It was essentially the Communities of Wabush and Labrador City and equally throughout all three, the portion of the Straits of Belle Isle, served by the road, L'Anse au Clair up to Red Harbour remained in the Straits of Belle Isle seat. In fact there is a special section in the act, 16(d), I believe, and I will come back to that, which requires that to be so. The commission had little discussion on that point.

Now let us just look at the changes the government made but before we do that, let us consider the commission's first report, because this map has certain resemblance to it. The commission's first report, Sir, more or less recommended that the two Labrador seats which we now call Eagle and Naskaupi, the two Eastern Labrador seats, should be divided among the north, south line or generally the north, south line, which is what is recommended here.

The commission in its first report also recommended that the Northern Peninsula seats be two and one-half and that they be distributed more or less as they are on this proposal. I think that the government's proposed line between St. Barbe and the Straits of Belle Isle has been moved a little further to the south.

Mr. Roberts: Moved further to the south or north, Fred?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: So this is made a little bigger now.

AN HON. MEMBER: St. Barbe North plus

MR. ROBERTS: Right. So now the proposal is that there is a minor change there. There is a minor change over here, for some reason only known to the government, they have chosen to put Conche in with the Straits of Belle Isle as opposed to in the Baje Verte/White Bay seat which was the original recommendation of the commission. Conche and, I believe, Northeast Crouse. I am glad that Northeast Crouse is still to stay in the Straits of Belle Isle because I have every confidence in the ability of those people. At public meetings I have often used their name to express their feelings. There is really a community called Northeast Crouse. A marvelous place it is. There are ten people on the voters list and fourteen of them voted Liberal in the last general election.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, I have, and they got the phone since then. Walter Joy is now very angry with the government because he said, they are not treating him properly.

The other thing which the commission did in their first report was not have the extra seat here in Bellevue, not an extra seat in Trinity Bay. There are extra seats within the St. John's Area. Now precisely where it was, you know, we will make a detailed description but it was in the St. John's Area. That was their first report, Mr. Speaker, the one which was made public. It was published in all of the newspapers and indeed I think there was a special supplement to it, in all of the newspapers. It was widely distributed throughout the province. Then the commission held eighteen or nineteen hearings and heard briefs from forty or fifty people. They were directed to do that. It was not merely that Mr. Justice Higgins and his fellow commissioners decided that they should be good sports and give people a crack at it, it was simply that they decided to follow the legislation and the legislation said they had to.

As a result of those hearings, Sir, the commission made some changes. They moved the seat from the Metropolitan St. John's Area. They took one away. They did not put it in Trinity Bay. They did not put it in Bonavista Bay, nor in Notre Dame Bay nor in to Green Bay, they put it back on the Northern Peninsula. They made that change. I happen to be one of the people who suggested it, a number of others did too but the matter is not who suggested it. Nobody who knew Jim Higgins would think for one minute that he made a change just because I asked for it or anybody else. It would be a dishonour. An incredibly great dishonour to his memory to suggest that.

Equally, Sir, nobody who knows Bill Summers or Ralph Webber or Gordon Seabright would suggest for a moment that the only reason why they made a change was because somebody asked for it. They made that change because they were convinced, Sir, that it was the right and proper thing to do, hearing in mind the legislation.

Secondly, the commission made one other change. They changed their original division of the eastern portion of Labrador. They did that after representations from the members there and from a wide variety of people. They are all listed in the report. Then the commission as a result of taking the seat off the Avalon Peninsula and putting it back on the Northern Peninsula made the change which led to the seat about which they were very unhappy and they say so in their report, Salmonier/Conception.

Those were essentially the changes the commission made. There have been some minor alterations. I am not sure whether they did or did not move the line between Fortune Bay and Burgeo/Bay d'Espoir. They might have moved a little further west taking Gaultois, but essentially, minor amendments. The Government, Sir, have now chosen to throw those out, to put them aside. In other words, Mr. Speaker, the government have chosen to ignore the considered report of the commission.

The Premier, Sir, on Friday spoke for about an hour and a-half or so in explaining the bill, as best he could. He went through it. We were treated to a tour of the province. I listened attentatively as did most honourable

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gentlemen. It is important to know the thinking which was led to this particular gerrymandering exercise. Because one understands the principles and if these men have not closed their minds to argue then maybe they will accept argument. Maybe they have

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close their minds. Maybe the fact that I stand here leading the opposition and suggesting changes might be enough in itself to doom many changes. I hope not. The Premier makes a fetish about being open-minded and about being fair-minded but I say that here is a good example, a good opportunity for him to show it.

I do not care how they carve up the seats, Sir, I will find a seat, seek the nomination, if I win the nomination, seek election. That does not concern me nor does it concern any of my colleagues here. I am no more scared of it than Mr. Diefenbaker, the Right Honourable John Diefenbaker, was when he was gerrymandered by the Liberals in Ottawa. Jimmy Gardiner did it and John Diefenbaker lived to attend Jimmy Gardiner's funeral as well as his political funeral. They did John Diefenbaker out of a seat back in 1952. They just gerrymandered him out. After that he did have a certain public prominence, he did achieve a certain degree of electoral success.

Whether I succeed or not I really do not care, that is for the electors to decide in due course and they will decide. But I think there are some changes. I am going to suggest to the government, very seriously, that they put that aside and go back to the commission's recommendation on the Labrador seats. The commission gave a lot of attention to that and the gentleman for Labrador South, who is not in the House, so I do not think that I am putting words in his mouth when I say that he was one of the persons who made representation.

Everybody who knows anything about the coast of Labrador and by the way, it is a pity that we do not have a seat called the "Coast of Labrador." It is a great historic term, it is the term by which the Privy Council gave us Labrador in 1927. There is nothing historic nor even euphonious in my eyes about Eagle River. It is merely one of thirty or forty large rivers along the coast. It could equally be called the Alexis River or Kenamu or any other river on that coast. It should be called the Coast of Labrador.

MR. WINSOR: It is better known to the sportsmen.

MR. ROBERTS: It may be best known to the sportsmen, the people who are lucky enough to go to the R.C.A.F. Camp on the Eagle River. They do not call it R.C.A.F. any more but whatever it is. The people who were there, they were there during the by-election in Labrador South.

Anybody who knows the coast feels that if you are going to have two seats in Labrador except for the Straits Area and except for Labrador West, the iron mining communities, the natural line division is Goose Bay in North and Happy Valley in South. The commission after hearing arguments, after considering it at some length decided to recommend that change. In their final report they did so recommend.

I am glad to see the gentleman from Labrador South back. I am just making the point that if we are to have two seats in Labrador leaving aside the Straits and leaving aside the Menihek proposal, it should be divided the way the commission recommended in their second hearing.

Goose Bay-Happy Valley, which is now one community, or at least by law one community and one municipality, is the natural centre for every one of those communities. Their air services feed in there, the school boards come down as far as Charlottetown, I believe, (south of Charlottetown they go in the Vinland Board at St. Anthony) their medical services were Spotted Islands the dividing line - Charlottetown - south of Charlottetown they come into St. Anthony North and there they go to Northwest River. Every kind of flow.

The Premier made a great deal of talk about community of interest and I think he believed it. I am not suggesting the Premier was misleading himself or us but every line of communication of travel or anything else is to Goose Bay-Happy Valley.

With the people on the Straits one can make a different case. I do not argue there. They are under the Straits of Belle School Board, the ferry tends to drive them back and forth when it works, they come to St. Anthony for their medical care. There is community of interest there. One can make an argument about the

fact that Labrador and the Island should have separate seats. I for one do not accept that. I like the idea of one man representing at least portions of both sides of the Straits.

The Northern Labrador seats are wrong as the government suggested and I would urge the Premier, if he is going to stick by the fifty-one seats and if he is going to change the recommendations of the commission - I mean he has every right to do it, the House is the master of its own boundaries - but to change those back. I think that it will provide a better opportunity for a member to represent and to serve the people who live in that area.

The presently proposed Eagle River seat, Mr. Speaker, is an impossible one for any man to serve adequately. I do not care who he is. My friend the gentleman from Fogo once represented in this House the northern half of Labrador. All of Labrador. No! All of it? No. The northern half from Lake Melville north.

Doctor Fred Rowe represented it all and Mr. Harold Horwood represented it all. In those days Happy Valley-Goose Bay was a very small community and it was a different type of life altogether. In those days one man represented all of the St. Barbe coast, from Trout River to Cooks Harbour. That seat, the Eagle River seat is completely unworkable. It is about 700 miles. There is not a mile of road in it. The only way to travel is by air or by sea. The coastal boats all go to Goose Bay. Every line of communication is for the Goose Bay Area. Bert Patey, the Labrador Airways, runs regularly scheduled air services both from Nain and from Makkovik on the northern coast into Goose Bay and from Red Harbour in the southern area up to Goose Bay six times a week I think it is. It may not be the best service. If they had some airstrips it would be better but it is a good service.

The District of Eagle River if it stays, the people there, Sir, will be effectively denied the services that a member can provide. Because there is no way, even though it is very small in population, 4,400, there is no way that any man can serve it and I defy anybody to challenge that. I think any member of the House who has any knowledge of the coast of Labrador will agree with that.

You can add on to that, Sir, other factors. The people of the northern coast, Makkovik to Nain are aborigine in the sense that our Inuit people live there, most of the Indian people live there and there are some Liviers there. Some - call them Labradorians and I do not like to use the term "White Labradorians"- but people who came to Labrador, maybe some of them fifty or a hundred years ago, but who were not aborigine, who were not native to the Labrador portion.

On the southern coast, right from Rigolet if you wish although Rigolet should go in with the north, from Cartwright, Paradise, right around, Sir, the people there are not Inuit and they are not Indian. The people are - I do not want to get into the semantics of Newfoundland or Labradorian. They are non-Inuit and non-Indian. They are completely different people. They have completely different problems. The problems of the north coast and the problems of the south coast are not alike.

I would think it makes infinitely more sense to split

the Happy Valley - Goose Bay community. That is not unusual, Sir. Windsor and Grand Falls are to have separate seats. St. John's is to have eight or nine or ten seats. Corner Brook is to have - Gander and Bishops are to have different seats. There is nothing usual or wrong with that.

I am not suggesting any additional seats. I am merely saying that given the population there, it is a better way to divide it. That point was made to the commission by a number of people and the commission obviously agreed with it because the commission recommended it.

I may add, I did not recall any point being made to the commission to counter that argument. I think with the commission it is the only representation which was made with respect to that issue in Labrador. There were issues about population figures. That was a different thing altogether.

So, I would suggest that very seriously to the Premier. I think it would make for a better electoral map. I do not think it makes any difference politically. I do not really care whether it makes any difference politically. I mean, let us put candidates and let the people choose whom they want.

Coming to the Northern Peninsula, let me say, quite simply, I think the people there are being deprived of a member. I will deal with this gross principle nonsense and show it for the nonsense it is. The proposal now is that in the most remote districts of the province, of the island, the hardest to get to and the hardest to travel - Baie Verte, White Bay is going to have 12,000 people. Where did that list go? I had a list here showing them in descending order. Here it is.

The second largest, numerically, constituency in the province - only Topsail is larger and the Topsail seat, you could drive from one end to the other in half an hour. It is a pleasant afternoon's outing for people in St. John's, Sunday afternoon. The Baie Verte seat is illogical and unreal and unworkable. Again the Premier and the government want to try to do me out of a seat. That is their pleasure and their privilege. Do what they want. It makes no sense to have the people in Roddickton, Bide Arm, Englee, and even Harbour Deep - but

Harbour Deep is a little different - the people in that area - the gentleman from Gander knows the area well, he worked there, so he will agree, I am sure, with what I am saying, it makes no sense to put them in with Baie Verte and La Scie. They have nothing at all in common.

The commission made that recommendation originally. I think the moment it was pointed out to them, they said, "My heavens, how could we have done that?" They realized they had nothing in common. The only thing you can say they have in common is the coastal boats still go down and back but very few people travel on them other than the tourists.

To get from Conche or Englee, at the end of these points here, from Canada Bay, across the Canada Head, the member will have to drive fifty miles to Plum Point on the Straits. He will then have to drive 200 miles to Deer Lake. Then he will have to drive another 150 miles from Deer Lake to Baie Verte. Now that is just unreal. If they want to take a seat away from the Northern Peninsula, that is fine. I mean if they figure it will hurt me, that is fine too. I will worry about that later. There is no way that any person can serve that seat, Mr. Speaker. The people in Roddickton, Bide Arm and Englee have more in common with Port aux Basques than they do with Baie Verte. There are no ties of any sort. The medical ties go north to St. Anthony. There is a nursing station at Roddickton. My brother happens to be the doctor there at this time. The economic ties are across to the Straits and they either go to St. Anthony or more often they go to Deer Lake or Corner Brook to do their purchasing and their shopping, outside their own communities.

The Roman Catholic Church, an institution not given to unthinking change, one of their great strengths, changed the school boards so the school boards now, the Roman Catholic schools at Conche, now go to Corner Brook. They were formerly under the so-called Exploits-White Bay Board. I understand, informally, that the parish is going to be moved from the present Diocese of Grand Falls, where it has been historically, it goes back to the days of the Harbour Grace Diocese, to the Diocese of St. George's. I certainly have not been told that officially but I understand it from the usual, reliable sources. It takes apparently five years to change a parish from one diocese to another. Neatly, of course, they propose - my friend from Hermitage will be interested in this - to put the St. Alban's Area, that parish which now falls under the St. George's Diocese, to bring it into the Grand Falls Diocese. That is the way the communications' lines run.

In the face of that, Sir, the Roman Catholic School Board, the integrated school board, is now under the Strait of Belle Isle. It was formerly under St. Anthony but north/south communications are cumbersome. You have to drive across here and then down, unless you fly or take a boat. It is now under the Flower's Cove Board, which is the Strait of Belle Isle Integrated Board.

There are no ties between here and here. When you add on to that the fact that the proposed District of Baie Verte - White Bay, with 12,000 people, is the second largest proposed district in this province, then there is something wrong. There is something very wrong.

Now Harbour Deep is a little different. I suppose I can tell the story, it is relatively amusing. White Bay was one district up until 1956. I forget when the White Bay District was brought in first. It was about the turn of the century I believe. I have it here somewhere. I guess it was in 1925 when we first got a White Bay District. Anyway since Confederation there was at one stage a district called White Bay. Sam Drover was the member down there. He was elected for both parts of White Bay. In 1956 they split the district. Fred Rowe went down into White Bay South and, I think, Max Lane was the candidate and became the member in White Bay North. Fred Rowe was elected three times there. Max Lane was elected twice and then they had the misfortune to have Walter Carter. That was taken care of in due course. Harbour Deep went into White Bay North and Jackson's Arm, the next community coming south along the coast, went into White Bay South. There may have been a few people in those days living in Coney Arm and little Harbour Deep but anyway these were the two large communities.

Mr. Speaker, I was standing in Harbour Deep one afternoon shortly after I was elected (There was a crowd on the wharf) and somebody asked me the question why Harbour Deep had gone out of White Bay North as opposed to White Bay South? I said, "Well, quite candidly, I have no idea. I suppose they had to draw a line somewhere and they drew the line at the Cat Arm River." Each district was hopelessly Liberal and it

made no difference in that, if you want to play that sort of a game but I said that it had to be somewhere so you are White Bay North. Then I said, "Now I have answered your question as best I can, can I ask you one?" The crowd said, "Yes." "Well," I said, "What difference does it make to you?" "Well," they said, "Nothing against you, Sir, you are a new member but, Sir, if we had been in White Bay South before, Fred Rowe would have been our member, would he not?" I said, "Yes, he has been the member down there for a number of years." "Well," they said, "We would have had a road by then because he has a road built everywhere else." I think it is fair to say that Harbour Deep has as much ties to - actually, it would make more sense to put it in with Humber Valley

because when they get in a boat they either go to St. Anthony or they go up to Hampden and get in their cars and go on. The CNR are now proposing, they are looking at Strathcona, it is a possibility for this ferry service on a daily basis to go between Hampden and Jackson's Arm to St. Anthony and then back. So it would make sense.

Again Harbour Deep has few ties with the LaScie Area and Baie Verte, the odd fisherman comes across and Cyril Pelley flies in from Springdale and Little Harbour Deep to go fishing. So that is Green Bay District.

You know I could point out another absurdity in that line there, Conche. The people in Conche when they get sick go to Roddickton. They may have to go on to St. Anthony or they may not, I do not know. It depends on their medical problems. Conche, Roddickton, Englee, Bide Arm are all an integrated area. There are no school buses from Conche to the other communities because there are all Roman Catholic children in Conche and the Roman Catholic children in the other communities go to the schools in Roddickton and Englee but there is only one parish, there is only one priest who serves the area. There is only one set of Protestant clergymen who serve the area. In every way Conche and Northeast Crouse and even Main Brook are tied in with the Roddickton Area. If the proposal under this redistribution is to split these, and to have despite the protestations of community of interest, to split them up, I think that is quite wrong. If the government wish to put the shaft to the people on the Northern Peninsula who need members, whether or not they have got any now or not enough now, we will argue that out when the time comes. But the fact remains those districts are difficult to travel, they are lacking in public services and they have a great need of attention and care. To suggest that a member can adequately represent 12,000 in Baie Verte/White Bay or whatever the figure is: 11,600 is it in the Straits of Belle - Then Grand Falls, I have nothing against Grand Falls. will only have 8,000 people, all of them living within one short area, one commuting area, that is quite wrong. Anybody who knows anything about the Northern Peninsula, I think will agree.

I mean I am quite willing to seek an nomination there, if that is what we decide to do. There is no problem there. It does not worry me.

Myself and my colleague for St. Barbe North, I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, we will have little trouble in resolving our territorial ambition, that is no problem. No difficulty at all. But I just point out that one is doing the people in that area a great disservice. A very great disservice. I devoutly wish it were not my seat I was talking about because I am open to the charge, I am only concerned with my own skin. I am not the least bit concerned about my political hide down there, Mr. Speaker. If I choose to run in the North, I will stand by whatever the people decide. If I choose to run elsewhere, equally I shall.

But I think the people there will be the losers. They will suffer. They will not have the service. I would ask the Premier to think of that and to reconsider it. I suppose, I do not know how it can be done without putting an extra seat back on the Northern Peninsula. It might mean, putting something in here, so as to make these seats a little larger. The commission I know looked at it long and hard and came to the only conclusion that they could recommend and that was to reinstitute a White Bay seat, in effect, to put a third seat back on the Northern Peninsula. Even then most of the seats fell on the high side of the population quotient.

Mr. Speaker, let me come back to the more general theme, the principles on which these changes were made. I meant what I said about the Northern Peninsula and what I said about Labrador. These people have a great need for the care and services of a member. Whether or not the present members are the right ones is something for the people to decide. The fact remains the members were elected and all elected in contests, it was the same with the gentleman for Labrador South in a series of contests. The people there surely are entitled to stand by their members. They will suffer. I know those areas well. I can say that no man can adequately look after the legitimate and proper needs of people living in those proposed seats.

Men will try and men will get elected but I say that no man can adequately do it. I say it is wrong of the government to have 8,077 people in Grand Falls and to have 12,088 in Baie Verte/White Bay. Grand Falls is one community and I do not begrudge Grand Falls its own member, not for a moment. It will not

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be the gentleman who now sits for Grand Falls I can assure you. I do not begrudge the

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people of Grand Falls their own member. What I do begrudge is other people being made to go short. The largest seat in the Province is Topsail. The next largest is Baie Verte-White Bay. The Strait of Bell Isle is the sixth or seventh largest, eighth, out of fifty-one seats and yet it is the most difficult stretch of coast, that and the Labrador Coast and it is just unreal, it is unfair and it is irrational. If the government want to gerrymander let them. I mean I can only raise my voice and my vote against it, but they will get away with it. The bill will go through in whatever form they decide to push it through. Joe Smallwood got away with it for years and before him Richard Squires and Arthur Monroe. The Liberals had no monopoly on that. Monroe was prime minister and he did it and Richard Squires did it. One can go right back through history. I mean it was what we were going to end until the Tories came along. They have gone right back into the same old mold. Well the next crowd will do better.

The principles, Sir, the principles should be clear. If we are going to try to provide people with adequate service then the least we can do is make a real and genuine attempt and this does not represent it.

Now, Sir, I could suggest why these changes were made and I suggest with all respect that they had nothing whatsoever to do with the reasons the Premier outlined yesterday. I will come back to his readings because his speech yesterday, Mr. Speaker, was lacking in logic. It was weak in history and it was non-existent in principle. It was a very bad speech. It was very bad. I was surprised. I thought that in his first speech in his last year and a half or whatever it is in the House he could make a better effort than that.

Mr. Speaker, the reason why the seat was taken from them and put into here has nothing to do with growth principles. I will explode that one tomorrow. All one has to do is to look at the list of seats to see why growth principle is so much arrant nonsense. The reason why it was done, Mr. Speaker, was simply because as the commission recommended it either the gentleman from Bay de Verde or the gentleman from Trinity South would have had to go looking for a seat. That is the reason why, to protect either Mr., I am not allowed to name his name, but either

the gentleman from Bay de Verde or the gentleman from Trinity South, the Minister of Rural Development. That is the reason why. That is the only reason why just as the only reason why Salmonier-Conception was changed. It was not all of those petitions that we hear about but have not yet seen nor notices, but I do not doubt they came in. I would like to see them. I do not doubt that people who sent them in said them openly and genuinely. I do not doubt that but the reason why this was - no concern for the historic district of St. Mary's. I do not doubt for a moment, Sir, their desire to have a district so beautifully named as St. Mary's and the Capes. It was gerrymandering for Jerry. It was designed so that the Minister of Education who has already worn out his welcome in three separate constituencies would have a seat to go back to. That is why we still have the ridiculous spectacle of having to go from Branch all the way around instead of putting the Cape Shore in as the commission recommended. That is why we have the ridiculous spectacle of the Trepassey area going in.

The decision was taken. Boy! Have we got to get Jerry a seat. We have to gerrymander to give Jerry a seat. We cannot have Jerry and Bill fighting it out for nomination. I must say it would be an intriguing nomination.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: I had forgotten that. I thank the honourable gentleman. It was Jerrydoodying.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, if the honourable gentleman could only recognize through his own capability half of that, I do not feel the least bit put out.

Mr. Speaker, that is the reason the changes were made. The Premier got up yesterday and he talked about community of interest. He talked about, Oh! I marked it down somewhere, I have so many things marked down. I am so carried away by his eloquence. He talked about recreational factors and cultural factors and economic activity factors.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Growth factors.

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MR. ROBERTS: He talked about growth factors. Now, Sir, I would suggest that when we come to look at the map we will discover that those factors were not applied with the same uniformity and logic throughout. How can one explain the people of Roddickton having to go four or five hundred miles to the largest community in their district, Baie Verte, on the grounds of recreation. If somebody

in Roddickton now wants to go skating, he will get in his car and he will drive fifty miles over to Plum Point and he will drive another 200 miles up to Deer Lake. Then he will go on up 100 miles until he hits the Baie Verte junction and another fifty miles into Baie Verte and then he will leap out of his car and go in and the Baie Verte, White Bay hockey league will begin its game. The same with cultural factors. If we are going to have an Arts and Culture Centre in Baie Verte, the people from Boyd Arm will be able to come over regularly. You know, it is just absurd. It is just an insult to the intelligence of anybody in this House.

Come out and say it is gerrymandering. Come out and say you decided to get Roberts and get Neary. Fair enough. How else? Explain ignoring the commission's considered report, their revised report, their final report, ignore it and create that sort of monstrosity because electorally that is a monstrosity, that is what they choose to do.

The Premier gets up and no wonder he did not sound convincing. He must have found it hard to believe himself most of the time. I suppose somebody like Jerry Korbai had written it out for him and he had to play the hand through.

MR. NEARY: Like a schoolmaster.

MR. ROBERTS: Like a second class schoolmaster. I have more respect for the teaching profession than to accuse them of being schoolmasters.

MR. NEARY: Not a very bright one.

MR. ROBERTS: No, he was not a very bright one.

There was no principle, Sir - let me look at some of them. Natural boundaries, we heard a great deal about natural boundaries. We came to look at that strange up here taking the Leading Ticks area out of Lewisporte district which makes some sense. Now explain the natural boundaries here to the people on the Cape Shore? They have a great interest, the people of Branch do and over in Trepassey for that is their cultural centre and their economic centre. Anybody who knows anything about the way this province works knows that the people along the Cape Shore and in Branch should never have been in St. Mary's Bay because it was ridiculous that the member for St. Mary's

had to get in his car and drive over to Placentia and down along the Cape Shore and over into Branch. He will still have to do that. The district as proposed only comes up the other side of Point Verde. It takes in the Cape Shore, the traditional Cape Shore.

So, talk of principle - there is no more principle in there than there is in - well, that is unparliamentary too. I am not allowed to say that.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: The honourable member can always say it and then withdraw it.

MR. ROBERTS: The only reason the government have chosen - they talked about growth. Now, let us just look at growth, Sir, because the Premier tells us the reason Grand Falls is getting a seat with 8,000 people, which neither commission recommended, was for growth. Well, more power to them. I hope they grow and prosper mightily. First of all that is a new principle. It was not in the legislation. Nowhere is it in any legislation that the commission or anybody is supposed to cast their crystal ball into the future and predict.

We are getting a redistribution only for ten years, for two or three general elections. Growth, that is a new factor but let us say all right, it makes some sense. We the government thought up something new. Now, the larger seat is Topsail. Obviously it is a larger seat because there is no possibility of any growth in Topsail. What garbage to say that there is no possibility of growth along the south shore of Conception Bay. That is an area that must grow and will grow.

The next largest seat is Baie Verte, White Bay. I do not imagine you will get too many population changes there but it is a rural area. It is fifty larger on these than Bell Island.

The next larger seat is Harbour Main, Bell Island. Maybe there will be no growth in Harbour Main, Bell Island as long as the Tories are in but given an administration that comes to grips with reality, there will be growth in the head of the bay.

Next largest one is Pleasantville. Now, there is no growth down here in the east end of St. John's, no growth at all. There

are just housing developments going up as fast as anybody can see them but that is the fourth largest seat.

Then we come to St. John's East Extern, no growth there either. No growth in the area from Torbay on down, no, no. Therefore, that is the only reason why obviously if we are going on the growth principle, we must assume there is no growth potential in that area.

Burin which takes in the communities of St. Lawrence around to Garnish, One of the most prosperous areas of this province, Burin - no possibility of growth in Burin seat or Grand Bank seat. I am sorry, no, I am talking about Burin, Marystown. You can see it on the west side of Placentia Bay, Burin, Marystown - no possibility of any growth there, no. Just because we have a shipyard and a fish plant and another fish plant in Burin and the possibility of the development of Mortier Bay, "No," he says, "There is no possibility of any growth and we will give them, the district with a mere 11,723 people - a new hospital going down there. No, no possibility of any growth. That is why they are large.

large. On the other hand there is every possibility of rapid growth in St. Mary's - The Capes, with 8,400 people. Every possibility of rapid population expansion in Branch, in Angel's Cove, in Gooseberry Cove and in St. Shotts. I am not mocking the people nor I am not mocking the communities although gentlemen opposite will probably try to pretend that I am. I am making a point. The gentleman who represents Ferryland knows what the growth potential is, the gentleman who represents St. Mary's knows what it is, it is just an attempt to try to save a seat. That is all it is.

No growth potential not compared to these other districts. Grand Falls may have growth potential. I hope it does, I devoutly hope it does. The government have not done anything to help it. Grand Falls with 8,000 people and the Premier says: "Because of the growth potential" and he hurries on to the next point hoping that nobody hears him. 8,000 people in Grand Falls, growth potential, that takes care of it. 12,600 in Topsail, no growth potential. What garbage! What nonsense! What an insult! Trying to pretend.

This is why they have thrown out the commission's report. This is why this group of principled gentlemen have thrown out the commission's report, have thrown out the work of Jim Higgins and the other three to bring in this new fistful of growth. It is a pathetic and a pitiful attempt to try to rescue a seat.

I say that the present gentleman from Grand Falls cannot be elected in any seat in this province even by acclamation. If he were the only one running he could not be returned, and this feeble attempt to try to save him a seat. I cannot even conceive of him seeking a nomination in Grand Falls. He might try one at Windsor-Buchans. He will not. They know him in Windsor-Buchans and they know him at Grand Falls.

Anyway, this seat of St. Mary's and The Capes: I do not begrudge the people there a member and I like the name very much, but to give the people there, 8,400 of them close to St. John's, a

seat and to say to 11,600 people on both sides of the Straits of Belle Isle with not a mile of pavement on the highroads in the districts and a nine mile ferry crossing, that you will only have one member. This does not seem right nor fair.

Do you want to call it six? Are we going to adjourn the House? I am sorry!

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. ROBERTS: Well, I will just adjourn the debate, in that case, Mr. Speaker. I have a few more words.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable the Leader of the Opposition adjourned the debate.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow Tuesday, December 3, 1974 at 3:00 p.m.