



PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND

**THIRTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND**

Volume 3

3rd. Session

Number 83

VERBATIM REPORT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1974

SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE JAMES M. RUSSELL

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MOTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bell Island:

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on tomorrow I shall introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the standard of living of the ordinary of the ordinary citizens of our province will suffer irrefutable reverses unless some semblance of order is restored to our province's productivity machinery, and

WHEREAS during this present year to date the province has lost uncounted hours of productivity through work interruptions, and

WHEREAS the bulk of this loss of productivity can be attributed directly and indirectly to breakdowns in communications between employer and employee incompetence at the executive and management levels, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that a select committee of the House be formed immediately to study the practicability of the terms of reference for the organization of a provincial productivity council where the membership truly representative of all parts of our province geographically and all levels of management and labour with the general objection of achieving complete team work within this province of employer and employees, aimed at nationalizing productivity to that level of competence without which the ordinary citizens cannot only expect no improvement in their standard of living, but on the other hand will inevitably force further inflation and economic deterioration. For without productivity improvement, Sir, there will be less and less for all to share.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member's motion appears to be in order procedurally and as far as I can see now it will be on the Order Paper tomorrow.

Are there any other notices of motion?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN:

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Communications.

HON. J. ROUSSEAU (MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS): In answer to the honourable Member for Twillingate, no we have no intention right now of purchasing the ferry in question yesterday.

HON. W. DOODY (MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT): I have an answer to a question. I guess notice of motion has been given, has arrived up on the eighth floor today. It was with respect to a question asked by the honourable Leader of the Opposition yesterday with regard to a situation in the Marystown Shipyard in which a gentleman had been suspended because of the difficulty - there were two people down there, in effect, who had been accused of theft. These people took their case to arbitration. One of them was found to be indeed guilty and he has still been suspended.

The case in point was one Mr. Stapleton. The question was raised regarding him. It is most unfortunate because the gentleman in question has been rehired by the shipyard on recommendation of the arbitration committee. He is now on staff at the shipyard, I understand. He is receiving pay and is fully reinstated.

The question of the pay that would have been given to him had he not been suspended is one that once again has been referred to arbitration. There appears to be some question as to whether the money that he earned while he was laid off is to be subtracted from the money that he was due had he not been laid off. It is now a subject of arbitration. It seems to be awfully involved for a very simple matter.

Several meetings were held with the Arbitration Board and I understand that Mr. Stapleton did not show at either of them. However, the matter is being resolved. If indeed the amount of money, \$5,000 or whatever is due him, it will certainly be paid him. There is no question about trying to deprive him of any pay or any rights that he has. He has been, as I say, reinstated. The case has been referred in terms of his monetary losses, has been referred to another arbitration committee. He will be fully reimbursed for any monies owing him.

MR. ROBERTS: So, the retroactivity question is open?

MR. DOODY: Completely open. If it is proven that he needs or deserves

this money, then certainly he will receive it. There is no question about it.

MR. ROBERTS: No doubt, he needs it.

MR. DOODY: That is right. That is the point.

HON. DR. A.T. ROWE (MINISTER OF HEALTH): Mr. Speaker, in answer to a question yesterday by the honourable member for Bell Island regarding incidents of mumps in the province, I would have to state that there is increased incidence. I have been able to obtain the figures. Although mumps is one of the epidemic diseases that we get fluctuations of every few years, we have up to this point something like 600 cases scattered through various parts of the province.

If you think of the number of school children, about 150,000 in the age group who will be infected, it is not being reported to us by the health officials as being an epidemic. I think the important part of the question was with regard to the availability of vaccine. I am able to say that some time ago we approved and authorized the expenditure of \$25,000 for combined mumps and measles vaccine. The chief medical health officer is in Ottawa at the moment, due back tonight. I had not been able to get, therefore, details of the distribution but the vaccine is available. I will be discussing with the chief medical health officer tomorrow how this will be distributed. So, the answer to your question is yes, we have the vaccine ordered.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Minister of Fisheries, Sir, has not risen in his place in this House on a point of personal privilege concerning an item that appeared in yesterday's Daily News', I can only assume that the facts are correct and I am going to put a question to the honourable the Premier, Sir.

Will the honourable the Premier -

HON. J.C. CROSBIE (MINISTER OF FISHERIES): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. That matter came up here yesterday and I do not have to rise on a point of privilege in connection with it. I told the honourable gentleman that I was not quoted correctly, nor was I quoted in context. Therefore, any statements that he draws from that newspaper interview are

quite incorrect in any event. Any questions based on it are just wasting the time of the House.

MR. NEARY: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The honourable minister, Sir, made no such statement in this House yesterday that he was quoted out of context. He denied having made any statements at all, Sir.

MR. CROSBIE: I denied making the statement you quoted.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CROSBIE: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the honourable minister denied having made any statements. Sir, I submit to the minister that there were thirty-five witnesses at that meeting including a news reporter.

MR. MARSHALL: Point of order, Mr. Speaker, if I may.

The whole question is out of order because it is quite apparent from the rules of the House that it is not competent in a question period for a member to inquire whether statements made in a newspaper are true or not. The honourable member has been using the question period for the purpose of inquiring and cross-examining as to whether questions or issues that have been raised in the newspapers from time to time are true.

The Hon. Minister of Fisheries had given an equivocal statement yesterday even though he was not bounded to reply to it under the rules that this was not true. This question is completely out of order on the basis that it is not competent for the Member for Bell Island to ask questions whether statements in the newspaper are true and similarly it is not competent for the Member for Bell Island to ask questions with respect to which an answer has already been given.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The gentleman from St. John's East has once again used a correct rule and used it incorrectly. The Beauchesne citations are quite clear. If one cannot properly, in order, inquire as to whether or not a certain statement in a newspaper report is correct or not, it is not the purpose of the question period to ascertain the accuracy

of the reporting in the public prints. One can, however, ask whether a certain statement represents the policy of the ministry. You will find Your Honour if you check the Hansards in Ottawa that this type of question is asked quite regularly.

My colleague has not been asking whether "The Daily News," the newspaper in question here, reported it accurately or not. If there is any quarrel that is between the Minister of Fisheries and "The Daily News." Although it is significant the Minister of Fisheries, who is normally willing to boil reporters in oil, when they do not quote him correctly, has not made any motion to drag the offending reporter before the bar of the House.

What is in order, I submit, and it is an important point, to ask whether certain statements and the honourable gentleman can make the statement, whether a statement represents the policy of the ministry. That, I submit, is a perfectly appropriate question and is so held under all the rules and the citations in Beauchesne

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, here again the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has gone to another rule which is also true but the way in which the question has been framed and framed by the Member for Bell Island is whether or not the Minister of Fisheries made a certain statement emanating from a report from "The Daily News": The fact of the matter is that the Hon. Minister of Fisheries already answered this yesterday. You are not allowed to ask - he framed his question in a manner - if he wants to ask what represents the policy, that is fine but he is not allowed in this House to impute that a statement made in the press (This would be a very dangerous precedent if it were allowed to continue) is the policy of the government. This would be dangerous in itself but even more dangerous to impute it to come from the mouth of the Minister of Fisheries or any minister of the government. That is the reason for the rule.

If the Hon. Member for Bell Island wishes to pose a question in accordance with the rules, that is fine. Let him understand and apply the rules before he gets up to ask a question.

MR. SPEAKER: It is now due to some five or six minutes of the question period debating this point of order.

The whole matter was dealt with yesterday by the Minister of Fisheries. He did make a statement resulting from the question asked by the Hon. Member for Bell Island. If the Hon. Member for Bell Island wishes to ask the Premier and indeed any other minister a question that is his prerogative but he was particularly having a long preamble and was almost making a speech in this particular question. I think the matter was dealt with yesterday and should not be brought up again today.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Speaker, would the Hon. Premier indicate to the House whether or not next year we are in for some very, very difficult times as forecast by the Minister of Fisheries at Memorial University, the day before yesterday?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! That is in essence the same question that the honourable member asked the Minister of Fisheries yesterday which we just debated and I am ruling this question out of order.

MR. NEARY: I can ask what questions I like, can I not? I am not referring to the newspaper. My question is directed to the Hon. the Premier, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! I am sure the honourable member for Bell Island is also aware that even if he wanted to, with the new rules brought into the House he is not allowed to question or challenge the Speaker's ruling during the question period.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, could I put another question to the Hon. the Premier. Would the Hon. the Premier indicate to the House whether or not his administration is going to face the thirty-nine collective agreements that have to be negotiated this spring? Will there be an election or will the administration be too cowardly? Will the administration be too cowardly to face this round of negotiations?

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, it could be either one or the other.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am dissatisfied with that question, Sir, and I wish to debate it at five thirty this afternoon at the late show, Sir.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: The answer. The answer.

MR. NEARY: I am dissatisfied with the answer, Sir, rather, and I want to debate it at five thirty this afternoon at the late show.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to get back to the Minister of Education who gave me an answer to a question November 28 about a bulldozer that was hijacked from Bell Island District Vocational School.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The honourable member for Bell Island as I mentioned the previous day tends to get into a speech and unnecessary comments during the question period. If he persists in doing that I shall also persist in ruling his questions out of order.

MR. NEARY: Could the Minister of Education inform the House if the bulldozer that was hijacked from the Bell Island District Vocational School has yet been returned.

MR. W. MARSHALL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. That question is obviously out of order and if the honourable member for Bell Island wishes to abuse a democratic right conferred upon the opposition and given by this government he can but I suggest the question period was conferred upon the opposition for the first time in the history of Newfoundland to be used in a much more constructive manner than it has been by the member for Bell Island.

MR. SPEAKER: I rule the honourable member's question out of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, will the minister inform the House, Sir, if a certain gentleman on Bell Island who took a bulldozer from the Vocational School in July and is still on his property, if he will be charged from the time the bulldozer left the school until its return or will he be charged for the actual number of hours worked?

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, that is a question that - one is not allowed to ask a question which anticipates the answer. The honourable member for Bell Island is asking a question with respect to a certain person who is indefinite, who took, apparently, a bulldozer. That anticipates an answer and therefore is completely out of order.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker. Once again the honourable gentleman from St. John's East is quoting a rule and applying it in a situation which is not intended. The question my colleague asks has nothing at all to do by way of anticipating an answer. He simply asked whether a gentleman who took a bulldozer was going to be charged money for the time in which he had that bulldozer or not. It anticipates an answer yes or an answer no and in that sense, Your Honour, any question must of necessity, inherent in itself, anticipate an answer but it is not an anticipatory question within the meaning as set forth in Beauchesne.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. MARSHALL: Further on that point of order: It has to anticipate the question. If the honourable member for Bell Island wishes to ask a question

he has to first ask of course whether or not somebody has taken a bulldozer.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. MARSHALL: He anticipates the fact that somebody has taken a bulldozer, whatever that means.

MR. ROBERTS: Further to that point of order, Mr. Speaker, further to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! There has been enough debate on this point of order. I refer the honourable member for Bell Island to Beauchesne, page 147, Section 171, Subsection (3) which says, "An oral question must not multiply with slight variations a similiar question on the same point."

MR. NEARY: Of course, Mr. Speaker, there was no similiar question concerning involving the charges

for that bulldozer, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: Since Bern Fitzpatrick took the bulldozer out of Lewisporte.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, well let me simplify it by just asking the Minister of Finance will Mr. Fitzpatrick be charged from the time the bulldozer left the school -

MR. CROSBIE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. This is an outrage not just a breach of order. On page 147 of Beauchesne, it says "A question oral or written must not: (a) contain or imply charges of a personal character." Now what kind of a House are we defending to when the honourable gentleman gets up and make a question like that charging somebody with taking a bulldozer.

AN HON. MEMBER: The last point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, has a bulldozer been taken from such and such a vocational school upon which the minister could check. This is outrageous this kind of slanderous imputation. It is not allowed in the question period.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker. The only charge involved in this is the question of whether or not there is to be -

MR. CROSBIE: A charge of theft.

MR. ROBERTS: Is he done? Is he done for the time being or are the rules of order one-sided?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Fat your heart out John! Always number two.

Now, Mr. Speaker -

MR. CROSBIE: number two.

MR. ROBERTS: Now, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: You know the incredible thing is he got to be number two briefly before he was displaced.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Now, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying to that point of order, the only charge implied or involved in any way is the question of whether or

not Mr. Fitzpatrick is to be charged rent? That is the policy of the administration. Now the other question is to whether or not Mr. Fitzpatrick had or has, I do not know if he has at this moment, a bulldozer belonging to the government, to the vocational school on Bell Island. I believe that my colleague has a letter from the Minister of Education in which he confirms that Mr. Fitzpatrick either had or has the use and care of a bulldozer belonging to the District Vocational School on Bell Island. All we want to know is whether he has paid for it or not and if he has not paid for it, is he going to?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The question as I have ruled on practically the same question twice now and for the third time it is out of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could put a question, Sir, to the Hon. the Premier in the absence of the Hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs. Would the Premier indicate to the House whether the alternative to Robin Hood Bay is going to be located over in the District of Harbour Main or -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

HON. F. D. MOORES (PPMIFR): Mr. Speaker, I have no idea but I certainly will ask the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

MR. CROSBIE: It will probably be moved to Bell Island.

MR. MOORES: No, we cannot move it to Bell Island there are too many good people there.

MR. MARSHALL: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Labrador South.

MR. M. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications. I have two, so to save time I will put the two together. The first one is: Could the minister inform the House what the status of the Labrador Royal Commission Report is at this particular time? What, if any action has been taken so far? More importantly how is the distribution of the printed report progressing? A number of people have asked what this is, so I ask the question for the benefit of the media more than anything else. The second question is: Has the government made a decision on the long term policy on subsidization of

air fares to third level carriers. I believe they were deliberating on that for the last several months.

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

HON. J. G. ROUSSEAU (MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS): The first question on the Labrador Royal Commission Report, government have already made a decision on some of the major aspects of it and that will become public knowledge in the near future, as soon as the facts are clarified. I think possibly the Premier or the Minister of Industrial Development who is President of Treasury Board might like to elaborate further on that.

In respect to the recommendations of the Labrador Royal Commission Report, all 288 of them -

AN HON. MEMBER: Will he repeat that, Sir?

MR. ROUSSEAU: The first answer or this one?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROUSSEAU: No I was just suggesting that one decision has been made. The Premier made some statement of priorities last year when the commission report came out and one decision has pretty well been taken by government and now under study by the Treasury Board, as I understand it right, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Well the procedure for it, and the procedure and the mechanics of it -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I said the decision has been taken and Treasury Board

is considering the mechanics in a procedure to set up to carry out that policy decision.

(2) The two hundred and eighty-eight recommendations: Each of the deputy ministers were written in respect to the recommendations, adjusted the status of each one. We now have them in. The last one came in just a few days ago. We are looking at those now and the Premier has requested me to prepare a paper on the departmental reviews of these and they will be done and hopefully the action will be taken on whatever ones can be taken next year depending on whether they are short-range or long-range things. Certainly the hope is that action will be taken on some of them.

In respect to the distribution, of course, as the Minister of Public Works and Services prior to this knows, it was printed in that department and these were sent out. I am sure the honourable member can appreciate as cannot other honourable members of the House that the volumes involved are quite expensive to print. It cost us some fifteen dollars to print.

Normally anybody who wants them as we had them printed they could be purchased for fifteen dollars each. In some instances the school libraries and so on, although there may have been problems with respect to some requests, but normally certain institutions and other whom we felt should have them were given free gratis copies. These copies normally - normally they write to me and I would forward it to the distribution centre and they would be sent under normal conditions. Sometimes they request not the full volume but only the synopsis of it. We send that too where possible but anybody we do not feel has a direct contribution to the report or should not have it free, of course, will be charged a fee of fifteen dollars for the report.

In respect to the second question, the second major question on the policy on subsidization of the third-level carriers that is presently before government now and will be considered by government within the next two weeks to a month. I would hope within two weeks. That would be the subsidy which is now of course, being paid to

Labrador Airways and the other two third-level carriers, Gander Aviation and Newfoundland Air Transport.

MR. MARTIN: Supplementary to that, Mr. Speaker: Is the honourable minister aware that with the closing of the navigation season for surface carriers that the whole question of subsidization now has a direct bearing upon whether or not the people in Coastal Labrador will get, in fact, an air service? Is the minister aware of this?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes, we are aware of that and the papers are already up and I have asked the Clerk of the Executive Council to get them out to the bodies involved, that would be Treasury Board, the government services and the cabinet, as soon as possible. So we should hope that sometime before December 22, I know that is one date I have heard, but sometime within the next two weeks I would hope a decision would be made.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bonavista North:

MR. P.S. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. Could the minister inform this House if he recently met with the Dairymen's Association of the province? If he has met could he give us some progress of the discussions and if the provincial government have any plans to help the dairymen within the near future?

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

HON. H. COLLINS (Minister of Forestry and Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I presume the honourable member is referring to an item which appeared in "The Daily News" this morning. Evidently he must be because there was an article in "The Daily News" which said that the Dairymen's Association are still trying to get a meeting with me. I received a letter from the Dairymen's Association this morning requesting such a meeting and that has been arranged now.

MR. THOMS: For the information of the minister, the dairymen of the province have been in trouble for some time now. Also, could I ask the minister another question? During the past season we have had numerous outbreaks in the forests as far as budworm is concerned in the spruce and (No, not the hemlock looper) the case pear in the birch, in the hardwood stands in our province.

This in some sections has been an epidemic and has done much damage. However, during the past couple of years we have had no spring throughout the province -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! I have to interrupt the honourable member. He is making a speech. If he wishes to be more precise with his question I shall certainly hear it.

MR. THOMS: Pardon me, Mr. Speaker, I had to preamble a little in order to set my facts straight. Could the minister inform this House if his department is planning on carrying out any programmes of spraying next year to offset any such epidemic?

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

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, there has been a report done by the Federal Forestry Service. The report has been in our hands for about a couple of weeks. It is being analyzed by the officials in the department now. One of the tragedies about the spraying programme is that we have been told by the federal authorities that the existing cost-sharing arrangements for spraying across Canada will terminate at the end of March, 1975, which means that the province might have to go it alone.

However, we have not really decided if we shall continue the spraying programme or not. Some people are of the opinion that maybe a better approach might be to try and harvest the wood. At any rate, the officials, federal and provincial, are now assessing the situation and just as soon as we have reached a decision I shall make it known to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Hermitage:

MR. SIMMONS: I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries: I am wondering if the minister could indicate to the House if any trawlers

have been constructed or are under contract as a result of the trawler programme announced by the government just over a year ago.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of trawlers constructed or that are under construction with government assistance over the last year including three that are under construction for Fishery Products Limited and which -

MR. NEARY: The boss is looking at you.

MR. CROSBIE: I am going to try to perform well. Because the boss is watching I do my best to behave. Now there are three under construction. Is that right boss?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. CROSBIE: Just a minute now. I would like to answer the question, Mr. Speaker. There are three under construction under the aegis of Trawler Fishery Products Limited on which the government are guaranteeing fifty per cent of the lease payments to assist Fishery Products in expanding their trawler fleet.

Fishery Products Limited, of course, is a company that has had considerable assistance from government and the fishing industry over the years.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. CROSBIE: To put it mildly. Of course it is a company that has done a lot of work here in the fishery.

In connection with the remainder of the trawler programme, as to whether government are going to proceed with a trawler fleet of its own and under what terms and conditions and when that programme will start, that is a matter that has been under intensive review. A study has been done in connection with that by RPC, The Resource Planning Council. I think it is, of New Brunswick. The report is in our hands. Action is deferred on that at the moment while we are dealing with the whole situation of the fishing industry: as to how far government are going to go, how many trawlers, how they will operate, the kind of system they will operate under. This will all be decided in the context that are going to be taken now in connection with the Government of Canada at Ottawa to deal with the whole fishing industry.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, am I correct in interpreting what the minister has said as an indication that the announced programme of November 1973,

which would provide seven trawlers this year, seven in 1975 and six in 1976, that a freeze has been put on that programme or government have decided not to go ahead with the programme.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have never heard of any such programme of seven trawlers being built this year, seven next year -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: In the Throne Speech, back two years ago.

MR. CROSBIE: Well, perhaps I was not listening closely enough.

Let this much be said about it, that the shipyard at Marystown where we would prefer to have our trawlers built, has been busy under the aegis of the honourable junior Member for Harbour Main, "Pickle Barrel" who is chairman of the Board of Directors. It has also been busy with a programme of constructing trawlers for other companies.

When we commence our trawler construction programme, we want to have it done at Marystown. That is number one. Now, number two - it is quite obvious, Mr. Speaker, that any government must continually review circumstances before it proceeds with any intended course of action. The circumstances of the fishery of the last few months have dictated that we examine very carefully exactly what our programme is going to be and what the extent of the programme will be. That is being reviewed under current circumstances.

The honourable gentleman does not need to worry about the trawler programme.

MR. SIMMONS: Somebody had better worry about it. A supplementary - I am surprised beyond words, first of all, to hear the minister say he did not know anything about it. Everybody else did. It is in print right here. The whole programme was announced here over a year ago.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The honourable Member for Hermitage is proceeding to make a speech and not to ask a question.

MR. SIMMONS: I cannot pass up the temptation to educate the boys over there a bit sometimes on this subject of -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The honourable Member for Hermitage is out of order. I recognize the honourable Member for Labrador North.

MR. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious that the "Whip" is out of the House and is not towing that group in line. I suggest that the Premier should get the "Whip" back into the House again.

Mr. Speaker, the question is to the Premier. Can the Premier inform the House if construction will start on the Lower Churchill the spring, next spring of 1975? If not, when does he expect to have construction going? Is it true that the statement made by one of his cabinet ministers, that the power from Churchill Falls will not be delivered to the island, not before 1981?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, a point of order on the last part of that question.

MR. WOODWARD: There is no point of order "John". Sit down.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: The honourable gentleman is referring the last part of his question to this alleged report.

MR. WOODWARD: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Fisheries has risen on a point of order but I have yet to hear it because of the noise being made by the gentlemen to my right.

MR. MOORES: To a point of order, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I will do the best I can to answer what was a very vague question, even made vaguer by the member looking all over the room. I was not sure who he was speaking to for awhile.

The fact is, as the Member for Labrador North well knows, Gull Island is of very major importance to this government. We are waiting, as has been pointed out on many occasions, a reply from the federal government as to what their participation is going to be. As soon as we know that, we will start work immediately. As soon as that is, only then can we govern when the power will come to the island. I can assure the honourable member this, that come to the Province of Newfoundland it will, nowhere else.

MR. WOODWARD: I did not know.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing inform the House whether or not the subsidized rental units on Whiteway Street, Hoyles Avenue and various other parts of the city have been offered to the occupants for sale?

HON. B. PECKFORD (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):

Mr. Speaker, I made a phone call two days ago relating to that matter and I think that some of them have been offered now. Now I do not know the number or the individuals involved. The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation are in the process of contacting these people to offer them to them first.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Would the minister indicate to the House at what cost these apartments are being offered for sale to these people? If so, what interest rate will the people be charged?

MR. PECKFORD: I will have to take notice of that, Mr. Speaker and give you the information tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The thirty minutes of the question period have expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. SPEAKER: Motion No. 1. I think the debate on the last day was adjourned by the Hon. Member for St. Barbe North and I think he has some thirty-five minutes left to speak to this motion.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, before I adjourned the debate last day, I was describing the reasons why we did not feel it necessary to increase the number of members in this Legislature by nine. Sir, I still maintain that we cannot, in all conscience, support such trivia as contained in this resolution, when there are so many other problems facing this province at the present time.

Sir, it has been estimated by some people that the increase in the number of seats will cost this province in the order of one-quarter of a million dollars, that is directly and indirectly through salaries, additional phone calls, office space, travel and what have you - one quarter of a million dollars, Sir. I submit to this honourable House, Sir, that this money could be better spent -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. CROSBIE: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): Order please!

All honourable gentleman will resume their places.

The Hon. Member for St. Barbe North has the floor.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat incapacitated today with the flu and unlike the Premier I was able to drag myself here

so I would ask honourable members on the other side to do me the courtesy of letting me be heard during the rest of this debate.

Sir, we submit on this side of the House that the money could be better used to improve the members' chances of representing the districts which they presently represent by increasing office space, staff, travel allowances and what have you in order that the present members can more adequately represent their districts. Sir, even if the government

had brought in a resolution which was identical to the final commission's report. We would have to consider whether or not we would support it because of the increased administrative costs to the public and the fact that the government have not put this province in shame over the past three years to stand such additional costs in order to support nine additional members in this House of Assembly.

MR. MARSHALL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, if I may. I am sorry the honourable member has the flu but I have to rise on a point of order. I would submit that the honourable member is being irrelevant. The question before the House is the approving, with alterations, of the recommendations of the Newfoundland Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission, established by Section (4) of the Electoral Boundaries Delimitation Act.

Now what the honourable member is debating is really the increase of the seats from forty-two to fifty-one in his past statements.

MR. F. ROWE: No, I am not.

MR. MARSHALL: This was a matter that has already been decided by the House, deciding unanimously, I might say, and the honourable member was one of the members who voted for it. The purpose of this resolution is to consider the adoption of or not of the recommendations of the commission spreading amongst fifty-one seats. Now I know that the honourable member as well as everybody else would wish to be relevant to the debate itself because it is the only way in which the business of the House can be efficiently conducted.

I would say, Your Honour, that obviously when the honourable member is discussing the matter of fifty-one seats as against forty-two, he is discussing a matter really which is irrelevant to the motion before the Chair, because it is a matter that has already been decided and I might say happily with the concurrence of the opposition as well as the government.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that nothing could be more relevant to this debate than the comments which my honourable friend, the gentleman for St. Barbe North is making. The resolution before the House, as the House Leader had to admit, is one which would approve a resolution that divides this province for the purpose of electing members to this House of Assembly into fifty-one districts.

Now I would suggest, Sir, it is entirely in order to say that an honourable gentleman does not propose to vote for this resolution because it provides for fifty-one districts. I would submit that, that is germane to the debate, the very heart of the debate. Also I find it most amusing that after three or four days of debate this is when the honourable gentleman has to get in it and I submit to Your Honour, Sir, the real reason why the honourable gentleman raised this point of order was completely and utterly unspoken but very real. Maybe he realizes that the government have made a terrible mistake. He is now trying to restrict debate and bring in a form of closure.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please! I think in those matters time is of the essence and certainly the line of argument which is being used by the Member for St. Barbe North is relevant so far as other debate is concerned. If indeed the debating of the fifty-one members as opposed to forty-two is irrelevant, it should have been brought up some time ago. At this point I do not think it would be right to cut him off from that line of thought.

MR. F. ROWE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I might address a question to the Speaker, if I may. Is this time on points of order taken out of the time remaining for the thirty-five minutes.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is hypothetical.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is not hypothetical.

MR. F. ROWE: Not at all. It is not a hypothetical question.

MR. SPEAKER: That is a hypothetical phrase but a very real question. I think in cases such as this the discretion of the Chair will allow the honourable member a couple of extra minutes and if that comes a matter of great discussion then I will have to give a formal ruling on it.

MR. F. ROWE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Sir, I was suggesting that this province is not in the financial shape to carry the expense of nine additional members. Sir, two sessions ago, we supported the principle of redistribution. We were naive enough to think that the government would by this time have grappled successfully with some of the major problems confronting this province such as the high cost of living, the unemployment, the crisis in education, the crisis

in the fisheries, the crisis in the labour field, what is happening in the Lower Churchill and such mundane things as water and sewerage. Sir, in our opinion, the government have not successfully coped with these problems and, therefore, we do not think therefore that the House of Assembly should be increased by nine and the adding of additional burden on this province.

Instead, Sir, the government have wasted millions of dollars on George McLean's various projections and advertising gimmicks for various departments of government.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! While the honourable member is going to be allowed a certain amount of latitude, I think that his latitude, well, as far as I can see his latitude has turned into longitude, maybe. So I suggest the honourable member might be more relevant.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, because of what we consider being extravagance of the government and I am not able to give the examples because of the Speaker's ruling which I respect, we do not, Sir, support this particular resolution nor will we vote for it.

Sir, there is a more important reason why we cannot support this particular resolution because we consider it to be gerrymandering of the worst order. We are being asked to support, Sir, the tattered remnant of a commission report headed by the late Judge Higgins.

Sir, members opposite may argue that we supported the bill originally. Well, Sir, that is complete hogwash. What we did support was the principle of debating an impartial and a nonpartisan report from an impartial and nonpartisan commission. Sir, it was a shock when we learned, when we discovered the hatchet job that the present administration did on that final report of the commission. Sir, I cannot understand why members opposite have the gall to suggest that we supported that mess that is drawn upon the map there at the present time.

Sir, the government in introducing the original bill to set up the commission to draw up the electoral boundaries which I thought was a great reform was offering the equivalent of a bouquet of roses to Newfoundland and to this House as far as electoral boundary reform is concerned. What they finally bring in, Sir, in the form of this resolution is nothing but a wilted pansy as far as comparison with the original report is concerned.

Sir, the commission made a preliminary report and a commission held public hearings and they modified the report and this is only the proper thing to do. They listened to the people. They heard representation from various parts of the Province. They modified their report, their boundaries and what does the government do, Sir? They disregard this democratic process altogether and they turn around and draw their own electoral boundaries.

Sir, the new electoral map, gerrymandered by the present administration

should have ensured that the rural districts or the districts more remote from the capital should not be discriminated against as compared to the urban districts or the districts relatively close to the seat of government.

However, Sir, if you look at this map, we can all witness it, there is an alarming tendency in the resolution and on the map to make many rural or more remote districts larger than the quotient of approximately 10,000 or 10,200, to make the more remote or more rural districts larger than the quotient and to make urban districts or districts close to government less than the quotient, if you study that map carefully and the resolution carefully.

Sir, the government did not allow any of the following factors to influence their proposals. For example, on geographical size alone, rural districts are more difficult to represent in this Province. More remote districts are more difficult to represent because of the difficulty of time and expense of travel. The more remote and rural districts have less municipal government, less governmental organization and structures. Therefore the member has to fill in the gap and the people in rural districts of Newfoundland come to members for many more things than they do to members serving urban areas.

Sir, many rural districts have relatively small communities,

communities, St. Barbe North which is one of the second smallest districts in this province, has forty-three communities, three of which have local government. There are many other similar districts to this. Obviously the member's job is made more difficult but that is not the crucial question, the difficulty of the member's job. The crucial question is the fairness with the type of representation that these people can receive.

Sir, they also did not consider the factor that traditionally a rural member is called upon to perform more for the district than his counterparts in urban districts.

Now, Sir, let us analyze the mess contained on that multicolored chart down in the corner of the House of Assembly. Sir, if you take the ten St. John's urban districts; that is, Mount Scio, St. John's East, St. John's Centre, St. John's North, South and West, Mount Pearl, Pleasantville, Waterford-Kenmount and Kilbride, Sir, we see there that based on the statistics quoted by the honourable Leader of the Opposition, that six of the urban St. John's districts are below the quotient and three are approximately equal to the quotient and one is above the quotient.

The average population of the ten St. John's urban seats is 10,500. Sir, if you take the thirteen metro districts, St. John's districts; these are the ones I just mentioned above plus St. John's East Extern, plus Topsail, plus Harbour Main and Bell Island, metro St. John's, we see -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Harbour Main and Bell Island is metro St. John's?

MR. F. ROWE: Metro St. John's, Sir. If you listen to the radio in the evenings this is considered to be metro St. John's, the thirteen metro St. John's seats. We see, Sir, that St. John's East Extern - not metro St. John's - 11,900 people. Topsail, 12,624 people. Harbour Main, Bell Island, Mr. Speaker, 12,000. These three districts over 12,000 of all districts - if the honourable the Premier thinks these are rural districts, why are these the very districts of the thirteen that I have mentioned, that have a greater population than the ten I just mentioned above.

MR. MOORES: I have no idea.

MR. F. ROWE: That is exactly and precisely it, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has no idea except possibly a political idea.

Sir, the average for these thirteen St. John's Metro seats is 10,900. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that these three that I have mentioned should be lower than the ten urban St. John's seats that I just mentioned previously.

Sir, of the twenty Avalon Peninsula seats - these are the ones that I have mentioned above and Ferryland, Capes - St. Mary's, Placentia, Trinity, Carbonear, Harbour Grace and Port de Grave - the average is 9,284 people.

The South Coast rural districts, Sir, the average is 10,143 people. I am mentioning this for a particular reason, Mr. Speaker, if the honourable members opposite would note it - of the seven Trinity Bay, Bonavista Bay Districts, the average is 9,435 people.

Of the four North East Coast Districts, the average is 9,971. Of the four North Coast Districts, Mr. Speaker, that is Baie Verte, White Bay, St. Barbe, Straits of Belle Isle and we will include the Humber Valley, the average is 11,407 people. I can exclude that particular district, Mr. Speaker. It seems relatively close to the Northern Peninsula. It is at the base of it. So that is why it is included. I could have included it with the seven West Coast Districts which indeed I did and I find that the average of the seven West Coast Districts is 10,359.

Yet Gander, Sir, twenty minutes by flight, local government, concentrated population, has 9,399 and Grand Falls has 8,077. So, I will let my honourable colleague from Labrador deal with the Labrador seats.

if you look at this you will see that the seven west coast districts, the four northeast coast districts, the five south coast districts, urban St. John's and metro St. John's are about average.

Below average are the Avalon Peninsula seats, the Trinity Bay-Bonavista Districts, Gander and Grand Falls. Above the average or the quotient are the north coast districts.

Now, Sir, the government have failed completely. If you look at the averages. Sir, of the categories that I have just mentioned - just listen to the averages: West coast districts (I shall round them off) 10,300: the four north coast districts 11,300: the northeast coast districts approximately 10,000, Trinity Bay-Bonavista nine and a-half thousand, the south coast rural districts 10,000, the Avalon districts just over 9,000: metro St. John's 10,900: urban St. John's 10,500.

Now, Sir, there are two things we should note here:

(1) There is a total and utter and complete disregard and failure by this administration to take the tolerance factor into consideration. (That is the tolerance factor of plus or minus twenty-five per cent) in order to give the rural districts of this province fair and equal representation. If anything, Sir, this tolerance factor of plus or minus twenty-five per cent if, and I shall be quoting honourable members opposite, if anything the rural districts in this province should be tending toward a population of 7,500. The urban districts and the ones close to the capital and the well-organized city and towns should be close to 12,500. They totally disregarded it.

That in itself is bad enough because the averages that I read out show that there was not any dramatic nor substantial nor significant use of the tolerance factor in order to favour the rural districts. To make matters worse, Sir, the greatest deviation from the quotient, approximately 10,000, the greatest deviation from the quotient exists on the Great Northern Peninsula. As far as the

Island part of the Province is concerned the most remote, distant, isolated and difficult part of the province to travel.

Sir, in spite of the fact that the -

PREMIER MOORES: (Inaudible)

MR. F.B. ROWE: If the Premier were not out having a smoke, Mr. Speaker, he would have heard me say that my colleague from Labrador will deal with Labrador since he knows more about Labrador than I do.

MR. MOORES: You said that this was a remote area.

MR. F.B. ROWE: I said, of the Island part of the Province. Again, if the honourable the Premier were listening, Mr. Speaker - on the Island part of the Province, these are the districts that are the most remote areas. Isolated.

MR. SIMMONS: Explain the difference between the island -

MR. F.B. ROWE: Yet, Sir, we find that it is the area of the province which has the greatest average population. Baie Verte - White Bay 12,088; Straits of Belle Isle 11,617; St. Barbe (The new St. Barbe this will be) over 10,000. Sir, in a situation where we increase the number of seats in this legislature do you know what the honourable cabinet or government, Premier has done? In increasing the number of seats in this province they have increased the size of these Northern Peninsula seats.

What a remarkable thing to happen, Sir. To increase the size of those three most remote districts and rural districts in our province while increasing the number of seats. Sir, the Northern Peninsula would have been better off if we did not have redistribution at all. If we kept the same seats that we have at the present time, the forty-two seats that we have, and God knows we need redistribution at the present time on the basis of that, but, Sir, if we kept the present seats these Northern Peninsula seats, these rural, remote seats would be better represented than they will be under this redistribution bill.

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if the honourable member would mind me just interrupting. I have to inform the House by four o'clock of what

questions will be on the late show today. There is only one the one raised by the honourable Member for Bell Island. Today's question period which will be debated by he and the honourable the Premier at five thirty this afternoon.

The honourable Member for St. Barbe North may continue.

MR. F.B. ROWE: Well, Mr. Speaker, you jumped in at a convenient time because I was winding up a point, and that is, if

you take the averages of the categories of districts that I have mentioned, you will not see any significant deviation in the average population except, of all places, up on the Northern Peninsula.

This resolution, Sir, I submit, discriminates very unfairly and brutally against the rural areas of this province, particularly the Great Northern Peninsula. It is a remarkable coincidence, Sir, that that particular part of the province has been reasonably Liberal and that they took one seat away which means that one of the two sitting members of this side of the House has to go looking elsewhere. I submit, Sir, that that will be a problem for the honourable member for St. Barbe South in the future.

Now, Sir, the point that I am making is that the government did not make use of the tolerance factor of plus or minus twenty-five per cent, to give the rural areas of this province proper, fair, equitable and reasonable representation. In fact, they have done the very opposite in their gerrymandering effort.

Now, Sir, I want to get at the principles of the honourable the government. This government stood up in the House some two sessions ago and introduced a bill to set up a commission report, or commission to report on electoral boundaries. They were going to end gerrymandering forever. They accused the previous Liberal Administration of gerrymandering and this government was going to end it forever. I would like to give you some of the quotes, some of the statements made by the honourable the Minister of Justice and the honourable the Premier and the honourable the Deputy House Speaker, in connection with that particular resolution.

The honourable the Minister of Justice said that this was an historic occasion: "Because it takes out of the hands of the government the responsibility for setting boundaries." Sir, he even conceded that many parliaments within the British Parliamentary System do not have this yet, that we were making history here. "It will take out of

the hands of government the responsibility for setting electoral boundaries. We were naive enough to believe the Minister of Justice. How is the Minister of Justice going to justify what this government have done to that final report now?

He also said, the honourable Minister of Justice, and I quote from volume II, No. 31 of Hansard, page 2344. The honourable Minister of Justice: "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." Mr. Speaker, how is the honourable the Minister of Justice going to justify that statement, now that the government have done the exact opposite of what he suggested? "No responsible commission, no responsible minister would tolerate nor would it be possible for there to be any change in any report that comes from the commission."

Sir, the honourable the Leader of the Opposition demonstrated that there have been thirty-one changes made in that final commission report.

Again the honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker. "I would suggest that this legislation will convince the people of Newfoundland that we as a government and that we as a House of Assembly are determined once and for all to do away with any suggestions that there can be any gerrymandering in as far as electoral boundaries are concerned and voting patterns are concerned. I would suggest that this legislature will convince the people that it will be impossible to gerrymander in as far as electoral boundaries are concerned and voting patterns are concerned."

Mr. Speaker, the honourable the government have done the exact opposite. The Premier has done the exact opposite in introducing this resolution. Sir, the Minister of Justice states, and I quote: "Rural Newfoundland still requires a great deal of representation and a very high proportion of representation in this House." Yet, they have increased the size of four of the most rural and remote seats on the Island part of our Province not to mention the Coast of Labrador,

what they call Eagle River. A small population but a formidable geographical area which I am sure my honourable colleague from Labrador will deal with.

The honourable the Deputy House Speaker, the Member for Port au Port, agreed with members on this side of the House. As a matter of fact he spoke immediately following myself on this particular occasion and he agreed that the bias should be in favour of Rural Newfoundland. These are the honourable member's words, Sir. He used Port au Port as an example and St. Barbe North as an example. He agreed that the population should not be over-estimated for reasons given by the opposition members. Population should not be over-estimated. In other words, geographical factors such as isolation, remoteness, travel difficulties, lack of local government should be emphasized not population.

The honourable member, Sir, stated categorically that a population bias would be an injustice. Sir, this government have come as close as they possibly can to making all the districts in this province equal to the quotient, no substantial variation used in the built in tolerances to favour the rural parts of this province.

Then, Sir, we come to the honourable the Premier. All men of principle. All men of principle. "What we want to do is bring in a redistribution bill that is fair, that is impartial and that will do the job for what it was set out to do and designed to do. Sir, is that situation on the Northern Peninsula fair? Is the redistribution resolution that they brought in fair? Is it impartial? Having changed thirty-one of the boundaries set down by the redistribution commission, is that impartial? Not on your life, Sir.

Again, Sir, the Premier: "The past government, Sir, could be blamed I think for some legitimacy of gerrymandering seats which I do not think should ever happen again in this province." That is what the honourable the Premier said. How can the Premier get up? What

kind of a skin does the honourable Premier have to have? How thick is it? For him to get up and introduce this resolution after saying: "Gerrymandering seats which I do not think should ever happen again in this province." It is an incredible statement, taking in view what was brought into this House a few days ago.

The honourable the Premier again, Sir: "The intent and I give this on the word on the government (almost religious, Sir) is to have fair representation with all the factors taken into consideration and that in its present state I think it is a good bill." That is what the Premier said, Sir.

In closing the debate the honourable the Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker, said that it is the principle of this bill and it is the view of the government that the formula and the procedures set forth in this is by far the most nonpartisan way of providing that the appointment of a commission, that will be totally free of any political pressures and political partisanship. Sir, can you believe that?

MR. HICKMAN: The honourable the Minister of Justice is perfectly correct. It is difficult to believe, it is hard to believe, it is hard to stomach, it is nauseating. How the honourable the Minister of Justice -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! I would just like to remind the honourable member that he has approximately four or five minutes left to finish up.

MR. F.B. ROWE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is unbelievable that having made these statements the honourable Minister of Justice cannot get up in this House and vote against this resolution. He has no other choice, Mr. Speaker, but to get up and vote against this resolution as does the Premier. He may see fit to change his mind in the course of this debate.

Another quote from the Minister of Justice: "Any resolution coming before this House which would seek in anyway" (Listen to this, Mr. Speaker) "Any resolution coming before this House which would seek in any way to change the commission report would,

I suggest have to be on very sound and valid grounds indeed. It is most unlikely that there will ever be a resolution coming before this House other than one to adopt the report. What garbage! What hypocrisy, Sir! It is most unlikely that there will ever be a resolution coming before this House other than one to adopt the report. They make thirty-one changes, gerrymandering, discrimination against rural Newfoundland but it is significant that following the passing of the resolution by the House the government is then obligated to bring in a bill implementing such a resolution.

Sir, in other words the government had committed itself to complete adoption of the final report of that commission. That is what the government did, Sir, through the voice of the honourable Minister of Justice, the voice of the Hon. the Premier and the voice of the Deputy House Speaker. Now, Sir, in the government's effort to gerrymander, they have done rural Newfoundland a disservice. They have discriminated against them, against the rural districts of this Province.

Sir, I would submit, I am going to close on a point of order if that is in order. I am going to close on a point of order. I am not trying to use the trick, Sir, to extend my speech beyond the two or three minutes at my disposal but I am going to close my speech on a point of order. That is, Sir, because of the documentation I just provided by way of quotes from Hansard, quotes made by the Hon. the Premier and the honourable the Minister of Justice and the honourable the Deputy Speaker, because of these statements it is obvious, Sir, that they had mislead and deceived this honourable House and that they should be suspended from this House or asked for their resignations or at least to retract these statements that they originally made in introducing the bill to set up the commission.

Sir, I raise that as a point of order and I ask Your Honour to rule on it.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, I feel that it is not really a point of order and am sure it is a matter of opinion that the honourable member for St. Barbe North has with regards to the matter which he just finished debating.

The honourable member for Hermitage.

December 5, 1974.

Tape 1916

RH - 2

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Could we have a quorum call, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: Will the clerk count the House, please?

MR. SPEAKER: There is a quorum.

MR. MAPSHALL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The honourable the Member for Hermitage called a quorum, at the time he called the quorum it was discernible quite obviously, in the House, that there was a quorum present. I would submit to Your Honour that when a quorum is called in future that the count begins after the quorum has been called, and you know it is making a rather charade of the House of Assembly really, if they have four or five on the other side of the House and there are ten or twelve over here, one less than a quorum which is usually the case, and a quorum is actually called because otherwise somebody can really put the House of Assembly in the state of chaos or chaos, whichever word you particularly wish to use - in that quorums can be called from the point of view of nuisance value when there are actually thirty people in their seats. So in future I would submit to Your Honour that when a quorum is called that there should be less than fourteen in the House at the particular time before the bells are rung.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Hermitage.

MR. R. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. At the time I requested a quorum, made a quorum call I counted the members on the opposite side, there were six members at their own benches and there were five on this side, that in my math makes eleven.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Sir. Mr. Speaker, the honourable House Leader has I submit been more insolent to the Speaker than I would have conceived possible when he proceeded to suggest to Your Honour that Your Honour should follow a certain procedure with respect to the situation which results when a member calls a quorum. The situation is clearly set forth, Sir, in rules number three and four, and nobody should know better than the honourable House Leader who is responsible for bringing in these change in the rules. This is not one of the ones which brought closure but if the honourable gentleman who restricted the debate, the rules are quite clear. Your Honour has always followed the rules quite scrupulously, and the rules were followed in this case here. The House Leader is being insolent as well as being inaccurate and even for him that

is a new high or a new low, whichever way one wishes to look upon it.

MR. MARSHALL: Well, Your Honour, if I may, I mean I would not want Your Honour to really think that I was being insolent to Your Honour because it would be completely and absolutely farthest from my intentions. Your Honour. But, you know, the fact of the matter remains on this whole business of quorums in any House, such as the House of Commons, it is considered to be really insolent to all members that a quorum, a reflection. Let us put it that way, on all members when a quorum is called. What I am really doing is pointing this out and also serving notice on the opposition that when such days as private members occur for instance, if they wish to call quorums as they have done in the past the government are really going to look at the opposition also to form a quorum because they are a part of the complement of this House as well as the people on the government side as well.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER: With respect to the point of order raised during a previous session, I think I said that I felt there was a little, perhaps not unparliamentary but honourable members making a quorum call is really a nuisance - A quorum call perhaps should be at the discretion of the Speaker to judge if that is to be so or not.

However the rule is quite clear with regards to the quorum. The new quorum rules state that when the Speaker's attention has been directed to the fact that there is not a quorum present, the Speaker should cause the bells to be rung and should cause the count to commence when three minutes have elapsed after the ringing of the bells. It goes on to say a few other things. I think there is no doubt about the procedure and I feel that is what was done a few moments ago.

The honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Sir, before I commence my few remarks in connection with this resolution before the House, I wonder if the page would distribute these figures that I have compiled over the last few days to the members on either side of the House, both on the government benches -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: No, Statistics Canada helped me - And on my own side of the House. There are enough copies there, Sir, for all the members of the House. If the members are not in their seats perhaps the page would lay the copies of the statement on their desks. I have sent copies of this statement, Sir, which I consider to be very important, to the members of the press. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, in all modesty that the press if they

see fit could really do the people of this province a service by publishing the whole statement as is.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Of course, it will. This is the purpose of the whole thing. Mr. Speaker, the member asked whether this would be relevant to the debate. Well, Sir, in order for me to demonstrate the outright immorality of this resolution, Sir, which would burden the taxpayers of this already over-governed province, with having to cough up hundreds of thousands of more of their hard earned dollars to provide nine more part-time provincial politicians with personal financial subsidies, Sir, to their businesses that they run downtown -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Hitting below the belt.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, I am not hitting below the belt. This statement is distributed, Mr. Speaker, to members of the government benches and also to my own colleagues here. That should give honourable members sitting to Your Honour's left, on the government benches, second thoughts before committing the provincial treasury to a huge additional annual expense at the very time, Mr. Speaker, when governments all over North America, as a matter of fact, governments all over the free world, are fighting a war on inflation.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: I thought it was in the Eastern World they were fighting a war now.

MR. NEARY: Well, Sir, I can only speak of the free world.

They bring in this resolution, Sir, to put another nine members on the government payroll right at a time when the free world in the war on inflation, Mr. Speaker, is attempting to eliminate every unnecessary expense they possibly can.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Sorry, my hand is off.

MR. MARSHALL: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Could I get some water, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, in their haste to use their big majority to ram this resolution through the House, they have chosen to completely ignore the report of the royal commission that was established to set the boundaries

and the new electoral districts. That, Mr. Speaker, may have backfired. It is not the first time, Sir, that a government, in their arrogance, gerrymandered the electoral boundaries, the district boundaries in this province and it backfired.

People are pretty well-informed today, Sir, very well-informed. They know precisely, the people of this province, know precisely what is going on, Sir.

MR. F. ROWE: There is not a quorum in the House, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): Order please!

Honourable gentlemen seem to think that while they are waiting for a quorum to be established that normal conversations can be carried on. This is not so.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): We have up to three minutes. My interpretation of the rules is that when a quorum is present, I will declare it so, if it happens before three minutes.

We have a quorum.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I never cease, Mr. Speaker, to be amazed at the weakness of some of the arguments that are put forward by honourable gentlemen on the government side of the House, Sir. I never cease to be amazed, especially, Sir, statements that are made by honourable and learned gentlemen. I can understand, Sir, the farmers on the government benches not being able to carry on a high-level debate in this House. We saw an example of that yesterday afternoon. Sir, you would expect, at least, some common sense, Sir, and some logic from honourable and learned members of the House. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, in my fourteen years in this honourable House that I have heard so many foolish points that were raised by the Minister of Mines and Energy, the member for Placentia West, who came out and said, Mr. Speaker, without a grin on his face, poker face, straight face, "Oh, we need another nine members in this honourable House; we need another ten districts so we can give better service to the people of this province."

Mr. Speaker, I think he was only echoing or parroting what the Premier had already said when he was stood over there like a schoolmaster, with his little silver pointer in his hand, pointing to this monstrosity we have down here in the corner. My

colleague reminds me that the Premier does not even have a probationary licence. He was only parroting, Sir, what his master had said, when the Premier introduced this bill. "We need another nine members to give better service to the people of this province." Sir, I say what nonsense. We have forty-two members in this honourable House now, Sir, cluttering up the eighth floor, with only about twenty-five or thirty per cent of them giving service to the people of this province. I can name, Mr. Speaker - I could start down in the far end there and I could go right down to the rail and I could tell you, Mr. Speaker, every member and every minister who earns his keep.

AN HON. MEMBER: Name them.

MR. NEARY: No, I will not name them. If I wanted to, I could. The people know. The people will name them in the next election.

MR. CROSBIE: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: The point I am making, Sir, is to explode the argument of needing fifty-one members, Sir. We have forty-two now and they are not doing their job. Most of the members, Sir, on the government benches, well not most of them, but a goodly number of the members merely come up to Confederation Building to pick up their pay cheque and then go down and run their offices downtown. Does the honourable Premier and the Minister of Mines and Energy call that service to their constituents, to their people?

Right here, Sir, in our offices, (You talk about increasing it to fifty-one) we do not have any space here now. The place is cluttered up. Over here, Sir, there are seven of us using one office and the telephones (We have four lines in that office, Sir) never stop. The mailboy down in the mail room never stops coming into our office with mail. Do you know where the phone calls, the mail and the telegrams are coming from, Sir? They are coming from districts that are represented by some of the honourable members on the other side of the House, including ministers, Sir.

MR. CROSBIE: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: What they should do is send us over their salaries. We are trying to do their work for them. They are not even doing what they have been elected to do now, Sir, and they want to add another nine of their buddies. Put them on the payroll, have them come up and have their offices and their businesses downtown subsidized by the poor old -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this resolution, Sir, and this administration, as the honourable Premier knows, have done a lot of

unpopular things. The Premier seems to be very concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the fact that his government does not have a good image and he has been moaning and groaning about that for the last two or three weeks. Well, Sir, I would say they are in their final death throes, the last gasp when the Premier starts complaining about the fact that the people, "Oh, we do not get credit from the people for what we are doing." Well, they have not done anything. Sir, that means that the administration is drawing its last breath.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! I am sure the honourable member's comments are interesting and relevant to certain topics but not this one. I suggest the honourable member get on to debating the resolution.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, Your Honour will see that it is relevant when I get to the point. The Tory is a faded image like Wick Collins.

The point that I am making here, Mr. Speaker, is that this whole rush to get this resolution through the House is designed, Sir, for one thing and for one thing only, to get it out of the way so that the Hon. the Premier can go down to Government House in his gas guzzling cadillac, dissolve the House, give the Lieutenant-Governor the first opportunity, the new Lieutenant-Governor -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: I certainly do want it.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: I am not complaining. No, I am coming to that. Give the new Lieutenant-Governor down there, Sir, an opportunity to dissolve the House and have a general election. That is why there is such a hurry to push this bill through. We saw the other night the Minister of Fisheries Sir, over at the University, tip his hand when he told us that we are in for a pretty rough year next year. Listen to the last paragraph. The Minister of Fisheries - listen to what he said, Mr. Speaker: In conclusion he doubted whether society in the western world would survive the next fifteen or twenty years. Was the man drunk? Was he high on drugs?

MR. CROSBIE: Look, I mean I am going to have to take an hour sometime to deal with this thing. I can see that.

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I spoke for twenty-five or thirty minutes to a group of students at Memorial and then answered questions for another forty or fifty minutes on many diverse topics, all of which has gotten confused in that write up in the Daily News. I have not bothered to bring it up as a point of privilege and so on because it is not worth doing. The honourable gentleman opposite keeps quoting these foolish remarks which I never made. Now in actual fact what I said and I had to go into a lot of detail to really explain this properly but anyway I ended up saying that it makes you wonder whether the democratic system in the western world is going to survive the next fifteen or twenty years, after discussing all this business of inflation and so on and so forth. You see, not what was quoted in the paper at all.

So I would just ask my honourable friend "Accept 'me' word for it. I am incorrectly quoted." I can take the time of the House or a half an hour or so to straighten it all out if he really wants to.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I accept the minister's explanation but, Sir, all he has done in his explanation is add fuel to the fire, Sir. Obviously the minister is frustrated and confused. He doubts very much that democracy is going to survive for another fifteen or twenty years. It is all based, his whole opinion, Sir, is based on what is happening in Newfoundland.

The roof is falling right down around our ears. The minister thinks because the Tory administration have not been able to cope with the problems in Newfoundland, Sir, that democratic government is finished. Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! The honourable member promised to make the points relevant. He has not done so. There is a section under the rules which should only be invoked after extreme provocation and the honourable member's attention having been drawn to it a number of times where needless repetition or irrelevance

can be ruled upon by the Chair. I am sure that the honourable member does not want that and the Chair certainly does not want it. If the honourable member has points to make which are relevant. I suggest he do so.

MR. NEARY: It is based on some of the statements the minister made, Sir, about our financial condition. Can we afford nine more members in this honourable House?

AN HON. MEMBER: That is the question.

MR. NEARY: That is the question, Sir. The minister says no and I agree with him. Well, Mr. Speaker, no matter what I say or do here today honourable gentlemen on the government side of the House, Sir, are dead set on gouging another three or four hundred thousand dollars a year out of the provincial taxpayer. Would it not be better,

MR. CROSBIE: (Inaudible)

MR. NEARY: It does not make any difference what they are, they are unnecessary anyway.

AN HON. MEMBER: Especially P.C.'s.

MR. NEARY: Especially, Sir, if you are sitting on the Tory side of the House and the government side. Mr. Speaker, would it not be better if the government were to take this sum of money that will be necessary to provide space and salaries (We shall see who is going on welfare after the next election)

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. NEARY: Yes, it would be a good idea. They could use it over there. If the honourable the Premier visited some of these houses and saw how people are forced to live he would not be kicking up such a fuss about welfare on Bell Island or in any other community. Over in his own riding -

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Certainly the honourable member is not totally guilty on his own in the irrelevant debate that has transpired in the last couple of minutes. I suggest that the timely intervention of the Chair is necessary so that honourable members can discuss the things that are relevant, so the Chair has intervened.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it would be far better if the government made a decision to use this two or three or four hundred thousand dollars, whatever it is going to cost for another ten districts or another nine members in the House, use this sum, Sir, to subsidize or pay for totally, for municipal councils in incorporated municipalities, to pay councillors throughout this province. That is the level of government that is closest to the people, Mr. Speaker, rather than providing another fourteen thousand for annual subsidies to add another covey of lawyers to this honourable House, Sir, who will only go out make one pre-election visit to their district and then come into the House, draw their fourteen thousand dollars and go down and run their offices downtown. Is that what they call improved representation? That is what we have now, Sir.

If we wanted to improve ourselves maybe a little self-discipline might be worth-while. You do not have to spend another three or four hundred thousand dollars of the taxpayers money to improve your service to the people of this province. Get out now and do the job you are supposed to be doing. So you know, Mr. Speaker, there are members in this honourable House who only set their foot in their district once a year since they have been elected, three years ago?

AN HON. MEMBER: That is a serious charge.

MR. NEARY: It is a serious charge but it is true.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Who? Who? Who?

MR. NEARY: They send out their executive assistants, their flunkies.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who? Name them.

MR. NEARY: Yes, I could name them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Name them. Who? That is a very serious charge.

MR. NEARY: What does the minister know about serious charges?

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible)

MR. NEARY: Irresponsible ~~man~~ mouth.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order please!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, you will note -

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order please! Order please!

I am not sure if the expression used by the honourable member is parliamentary or not. It certainly is not a familiar one to the Chair. I suggest that all honourable members observe the courtesies that should be afforded any member who has the floor. Of course the member who has the floor has a duty to make his remarks relevant and not provocative since that will evoke responses.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, If you really get me in full-flight - they are really smart on the other side of the House.

Sir, you will note from the first column of the figures and I might mention, Mr. Speaker, at the outset (I would like to draw members' attention to the note at the top)

These figures that I have, Sir, members' remuneration, are basic. They do not include things like car mileage, representation amounts and that sort of thing, executive assistants or anything like that, Sir. This is purely basic. It does not include Gerry Korhai or George McLean or Newfoundland Information Services, Sir. If the Premier wanted an investigation in this province, he is so bitter, the Premier is so bitter and so concerned about his image and not getting credit, he should investigate Newfoundland Information Services and see what they have been doing for the last two or three years.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please!

I have not kept count but I think this is the fifth occasion on which I have interrupted the honourable member.

MR. NEARY: I have the right to be heard in silence, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): The honourable member has the right to be heard in silence. He has the duty to make relevant debate or relevant comments. The honourable member has been abusing that.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would ask Your Honour to strictly enforce the rule of when a member is speaking, that he be heard in silence, Sir. That is why, Sir, I am being -

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): Order, please!

The only weapon that the Speaker has to enforce the rule that people be heard in silence is to request it. There are no punitive measures that the Chair has with the exception of expelling people from the House which should only be done in very exceptional circumstances. If the honourable member makes relevant debate, I am sure that any interruptions will be few and far between.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I started to explain to the House that these figures are by no means complete, Sir. They are not all inclusive. They just include the basic salary. That is expenses and sessional indemnity.

Members will note, Mr. Speaker, from the first column of figures that this Newfoundland of ours has the lowest percentage of population over nineteen years of age which is one year more, as members know, one year more than the voting age. For most of these

people, Mr. Speaker, in that age category - I might point out for the information of members, the reason it had to - Mr. Speaker, I cannot hear myself talking down here. Sir, we are not down in the Bellmont Tavern somewhere. This is the House of Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): I think the honourable member's point is certainly correct. He is attempting to make relevant debate, which has been requested of him on a number of occasions. Honourable members to my left have been speaking in tones that are by no means monotone. They are not low. I can hear them. Certainly it is very confusing. I ask honourable members to my left if they would observe that rule which is their duty to observe, that the honourable member, who has the floor, be heard in silence.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the reason I had to use the percentage of population over nineteen years of age is because there are no figures available from Statistics Canada for the percentage of the population over eighteen years of age. They do it in groups of five years. So, I had to use nineteen years of age which is one year more than the voting age in Newfoundland at the present time.

So, this is the age, Mr. Speaker, when most of the young people make their initial entry into the work force and become taxpayers. They then enjoy taxpaying status. Now, you will note, Mr. Speaker, that we here in Newfoundland have the smallest percentage of taxpayers and voters of all the provinces. We have the smallest number of all the provinces

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Smallest, Sir. That is twice I have said it. Do I have to repeat it a third time? We in Newfoundland, Sir, have the smallest percentage of taxpayers and voters of all the provinces including Prince Edward Island.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: From Statistics Canada.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Now, hold on, I am coming to that. This simply means, Mr.

December 5, 1974

Tape 1922

IB-3

Speaker, that the taxpayers we have will also have to support more dependants than in any other province and that in times of inflation, Your Honour, as every member of this House

should realize by now that in times of inflationary pressure, Sir, this makes the burden more difficult for our working heads of families in this province. Further, Mr. Speaker, because we lead all provinces in social assistance recipients, this (I understand, Sir, that this year there has been a drastic increase of twenty-five per cent, as compared with a year ago, in the number of recipients receiving social assistance in this province) this, red line of employed, Sir, also has to contribute to the support of those who are forced into unemployment through the failure of the present government to develop our natural resources, Sir, and attract new industries, and their refusal, Mr. Speaker, to discuss the curse of high unemployment during this current sitting of the House of Assembly.

MR. MARSHALL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. We are now getting into a debate of the financial situation of the province in which we were plunged by the previous administration. The fact of the matter is that Your Honour, I know, has already ruled with respect to the relevancy of the fifty-one seats. The resolution under debate is one with respect to the alignment of boundaries and the acceptance of the commission's report. Fifty-one seats were already contemplated by the act under consideration. I would submit to Your Honour that certainly the honourable member is being irrelevant. With respect to his continuous references to the fifty-one seats, he is now getting into the realm of unnecessary repetition, which is not in order by the rules.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that the honourable member could contribute much more to the debate if he would get to the very gist of the resolution itself, that is the boundaries rather than engage in an irrelevant debate upon the financial conditions of the province and secondly, unnecessary repetition, repeating over and over again, with respect to the fifty-one seats which is not really an issue at this particular stage.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, that is the issue, Sir, and I am speaking to a point of order.

MR. MARSHALL: I am not finished, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): Order please!

The Hon. House Leader is making a point of order. It is rather lengthy and I would suggest that he make his point within the next thirty seconds or so.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I thought I had already made it. "Unnecessary repetition and irrelevancy on the part of the Member for Bell Island." I will now give way and allow him the courtesy to speak. I will not interrupt him in the same manner as he did myself.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I can tell by the smile on Your Honour's face that Your Honour recognizes the fact that that is not a point of order, Sir. That is just a stalling and delaying tactic. My remarks, Sir, are relevant. We are talking about changing the electoral boundaries to add another ten districts, Sir, to the House and an additional nine members, Sir. I am completely on target. I submit, Sir, to Your Honour that Your Honour not tolerate these foolish points of order that are only meant to use up the time because the honourable members know that I only have forty-five minutes in which to speak.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): Well it is the same point that was brought up earlier and that is the matter of relevance of this whole debate. Certainly, many speakers have been given great leeway in debating it. It is not an unimportant matter. If a ruling was to be made, it should have been made earlier. I think now that it would be unjust to severely restrict the scope of the honourable member's debate, although the honourable member certainly appears to want to expand upon the already expanded terms of reference we established earlier.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, Your Honour will appreciate the fact that there is no other way, Sir, you can talk about adding ten seats or ten districts to the House, increasing it by nine members, without talking about cost. It is going to cost the taxpayers another \$300,000 or \$400,000. How foolish is the Minister without Portfolio!

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Substantiate it? I will substantiate it. Mr. Speaker, column (2), I would like to draw the honourable members' attention to column (2), Mr. Speaker, which should give every member of this honourable

House, Sir, who is mentally aware and is capable of common sense. It should give every member, Sir, food for thought, further food for consideration. As I said in the beginning, Sir, do we need more members in this already overcrowded House when Ontario, Mr. Speaker, with nearly twenty times our population has less than the number of MHAs, or as they call them in Ontario, Mr. Speaker, MLAs--

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: That is what they do. In Ontario they call them members of the Legislative Assembly, not members of the House of Assembly.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Do we need more members, Sir, in this overcrowded House when over in Ontario they have a less number of members than we do.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Mostly Tories.

MR. NEARY: Mostly Tories. They will not be after the next election.

Mr. Speaker, do we need fifty-one members to add to the congestion here in Confederation Building when Nova Scotia's forty-six members, Sir, adequately represent a voting population five times ours and they are mostly Liberal.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Ah! Well I can come to that too.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: No, two wrongs do not make a right. Column three, Sir; members will be interested in this particular item, Members Basic Remuneration, Column three. I will pass over this briefly, Mr. Speaker.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: The members in parenthesis, I might say, Sir, represent the sessional pay in order of acceptability to the electorate. The most acceptable here I presume, Mr. Speaker, would be the provinces with the lowest cost per member. So we in the Province of Newfoundland, Sir, you can look at column five there with almost the lowest per capita income in the whole of Canada, the second lowest per capita income in the country. Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? We pay ourselves the highest sessional indemnities and we have the nerve,

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is not correct.

MR. NEARY: That is correct, Sir.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: I will explain that later on. We have the nerve, Sir, to contemplate a bill.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: He was one of the ones who insisted on it.

MR. NEARY: I was not one of ones who insisted on it, Sir, I had no say in it.

MR. CROSBIE: He came over across behind the Speaker's Chair a dozen times looking for more money.

MR. NEARY: That is a terminological inaptitude and the minister should apologize. That is not true. That is not the case. I never asked a Crosbie for anything in my life and I hope I will never have to. I hope I will never have to, Sir.

MR. CROSBIE: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! I think the honourable member's rights are being abused. He has a right to be heard in silence and honourable members to my left are certainly not observing that rule. I suggest that it be observed.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we have already the highest sessional indemnities in the whole of Canada. We have the nerve to contemplate a bill that will add nine more to feed at the already sadly depleted public trough.

MR. CROSBIE: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, if we go ahead with this resolution, every member, Sir, every member, and I say this in all sincerity, every member voting in favour of it should be sent to the Waterford Hospital under grave suspicion, Sir, of impaired financing, not impaired driving, impaired financing. Now, Mr. Speaker, the killer column, the fourth one from the left and the second from the right, that headed "Cost of members per thousand population over nineteen."

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Almost

needless to say, Mr. Speaker, in this particular column, the figures again in parenthesis, Sir, represent their acceptability to the voters and taxpayers. Even our present figures put us right at the bottom of the list exceeded, Mr. Speaker, in acceptability only by the hopeless case that the honourable Minister of Fisheries referred to of Little Prince Edward Island which, Mr. Speaker, even with its pittance of \$6,000 a member is so far over manned that the sessional indemnities per 1,000 at voting age works out to nearly \$3,000.

MR. CROSBIE: Will the hon. member permit a question?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the honourable minister will have a chance to speak in the House and I have got the five thirty late show coming up. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the honourable minister will speak in this debate. When the honourable minister was over on this side of the House we heard so much bellyaching and so much chaw about gerrymandering -

MR. CROSBIE: Who did? I never did.

MR. MURPHY: He was a party to it.

MR. NEARY: Oh yes, the honourable minister did, Sir, and the Minister of Justice who had been converted. They have all been converted now.

Now, Sir, gerrymandering is okay now that they are over on the government side of the House, over with the Tories. They have been converted. I heard the Minister of Social Services on his hoofs in this honourable House talking about gerrymandering. What we should be asking ourselves, Sir, in this province is what can we do?

MR. CROSBIE: You could retire.

MR. NEARY: Ah, would they not love that, Mr. Speaker. Would they not love it. They tried to get me in the courts. They tried to get me with a judicial enquiry. They tried to get me by having me thrown out of the House the last session. Now, they are going to be looking at my seat for the next few months. Well, they can look at my front if they want to, Sir. It is indecent to look at my seat.

MR. CROSBIE: We tried to get you by having you run for the Liberal Leadership but you got smashed there. Smashed!

MR. ROBERTS: He followed a noble precedent there.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: The one who will miss me in this honourable House is my

old honourable buddy, the honourable the Premier, who sent me a Christmas card the other day with a picture of Confederation Building on it with a rubber stamp. I always knew the Premier was a rubber stamp. He cannot even sign his own Christmas cards personally.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order!

MR. NEARY: I know I am wandering. I realize it, Mr. Speaker. I am well aware of it, Sir.

MR. ROBERTS: It is certainly relevant. I means the Premier will have fifty-one rubber stamps to make.

MR. NEARY: What we should be asking ourselves in this honourable House, Sir, is what we can do to improve the quality of government in this province. What have they done out in British Columbia for its people? There is the acid test, Mr. Speaker. There is the acid test.

The cost figure, Sir, per member in British Columbia is \$353.07 unless, Sir, they have upped it recently. But the average cost is \$353.04.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Lies.

MR. NEARY: Oh, lies my eyeball. Get up and make a speech and contradict it. \$353.04 as compared to Newfoundland, Sir, \$2,077.74. Figures do not lie. The Minister of Fisheries is always producing figures in this honourable House. Most of the time I think he is right. I believe him.

You know what we are asking. We are asking to have that increased by 21.4 per cent to bring it up from \$2,077 up to 2,522.97. Mr. Speaker, I ask you and I ask honourable members, I ask the honourable member for St. John's South who is a man who goes around wearing his principles on his sleeve - he almost has a placard on him, a man of high moral principles - is he going to put up with this?

MR. ROBERTS: Well, the Minister of Justice has.

MR. NEARY: The Minister of Justice is always rubbing his hands. He is going to have a prayer breakfast, Sir. I do not know if he has had it yet, going to have a prayer breakfast over at the Holiday Inns. Is the honourable Minister of Justice going to sacrifice his principles and put up with this?

MR. HICKMAN: The Leader of the Opposition and I are.

MR. ROBERTS: No, I am not.

MR. NEARY: No, the Leader of the Opposition is not having the breakfast.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: I know I am on the programme but it was not the programme I was told about. I was told it was nonpartisan.

MR. NEARY: I appreciate this, Sir. I wish the members would settle it outside because -

MR. ROBERTS: "Alex" is the only one who has a prayer.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Make no wonder, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice would hold a prayer meeting. He is going to have to hold a good many more prayer breakfasts before he gets forgiveness for

participating in this gerrymandering. Mr. Speaker, how will nine more members in this House ensure a better deal for our ordinary people. How will it? I wish somebody would tell me. I have not heard it so far in the debate. The people over in Ontario managed to get representation for a cost, per thousand voters, of \$419.94, bargain price. It is going to cost us a heck of a lot more to get that in Newfoundland, with a population of 540,000 odd.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): The honourable member has two minutes remaining.

MR. NEARY: Time flies, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, before the members of this House saddle the shrinking number of unemployed in this province, wage earners, Sir, who are just hanging on by a hair's breath from being away from the lowest per capita income in the entire country, before they saddle our taxpayers, Sir, with another carelessly, cruelly, imposed financial milestone around their necks, another provincial contribution, Sir, imposed on our people to add to the already galloping inflation that we have in this province, to add to the many already in existence who cannot cope with the high cost of living in this province, Sir. I beg members on either side of the House, especially those members who wear their principles on their sleeves, on the government benches to stand back and take a good, hard look at what they are doing to the people of this province who elected them to office, a scant twenty-two, twenty-three months or twenty-four months ago and then, Mr. Speaker, in good conscience, defeat a bill calculated to do nothing but add to the already miserable tax burden on our people in return for no conceivable real benefits, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I notice that one minister and one backbencher from the government side have spoken and I was more or less waiting because I thought there was going to be a

greater participation in this debate, especially from the government side. It seems rather disappointing to me that apparently no one on the government side is willing to get into this debate. Apparently some one in Cabinet or the Premier have said to them, "Now, boys, in the House lay low, shut up, be quiet and let the bill run through."

I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that members of this honourable House would be performing their duty properly if they allow this bill to slide through without speaking to it because there are many principles involved here, Mr. Speaker, many principles that have apparently been broken.

Mr. Speaker, this whole question of redistribution and cutting up the districts in Newfoundland first came to the front during the Throne Speech Debate of April 19, 1972. I would like to read for the information of the honourable members what the words of the Governor were at that time, or the administrator. The Throne Speech read, Mr. Speaker: "It is the intention of my government to establish an independent commission whose responsibility it will be to examine closely the present system of regional representation in the honourable House. Population shifts, as well as improvements in transportation and communication facilities may have resulted in certain inequities in our present electoral boundaries. This permanent commission will report at regular intervals to government and will make recommendations consistent with a just and equitable system of representation."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have no quarrel with this proposed commission

nor with the work of this proposed commission I believe if it were carried out and if it were adhered to it could be a useful and just unit of our government. It is too bad, Mr. Speaker, that the present government did not also practice upon the words that it preached at that time.

We have heard, Mr. Speaker, in the past couple of years at least two ministers in the present administration and two ministers that are presently in the cabinet speak of how this government were going to be white, pure and clean as far as distribution was concerned. There was going to be no more gerrymandering, this was a thing of the past. They were going to be unique in government, they were going to be first in government to redistribute the seats of this province so that no gerrymandering would take place. They had given their word, Mr. Speaker, that they would adhere and strictly adhere to the recommendations that would be presented by the commission.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it was only shortly after the Throne Speech Debate of April 1972, that the Minister of Education - and I am sorry he is not in his seat this afternoon, I am sure he would love to hear the words re-uttered such as he spoke back on April 26, 1972 - He was at that time. Mr. Speaker, rather put out because he thought that gerrymandering had gone on before 1972. Maybe he was right. I do not believe the previous government were completely white, there may have been one or two little dark spots here and there.

MR. DOODY: Shame!

MR. THOMS: But, Mr. Speaker, that was certainly much better than the dark sky that hangs over this present administration at the present time.

AN HON. MEMBER: Black plague.

MR. ROBERTS: Polka dotted.

MR. THOMS: Let me read for you the words, Mr. Speaker, that the present Minister of Education, the Member for St. Mary's uttered to this House on April 25, 1972. He said, Mr. Speaker, "We wish to put an end

to gerrymandering and such an independent commission will put an end to gerrymandering." When the minister spoke these words, Mr. Speaker, I thought he was in earnest. I thought that now, gerrymandering would be ended once (and) for all and that this present government would take it upon themselves to bring before this honourable House a resolution that would be pure and clean from any possible gerrymandering.

The Member for St. Mary's, Mr. Speaker, went on to say: "The only thing that we of the administration can take credit for is that in our first election to office we irrevocably, irretrievably put an end to this kind of political skulduggery by stating in the Speech from the Throne the government's intention and policy to establish an independent that obviously, is binding on us."

I would like for the honourable members of this House, Mr. Speaker, to note those last words the Minister of Education said; "To establish an independent commission that is obviously binding on us."

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the commission brought in its second report, that report should have been binding on the present government. The Minister of Education back in 1972 said it was. The Minister of Justice back in March of 1973 said it was. Here, lo and behold! we find it is not. They have gone back on their word. They have said one thing and done another. They have definitely misled this House. They have definitely crucified the integrity of members of government.

Just imagine to stand up in this House and to say that the findings, that the recommendation of the commission is binding on us all. The resolution that is now before the House is certainly not one that is the same as the commission recommended in its second report. This, Mr. Speaker, is obviously bad business. Any tampering whatsoever with the second report of the Royal Commission on Redistribution is automatically gerrymandering.

Like one of the papers said just a couple of days ago when they referred to it as frankiemandering- whether it is gerrymandering or frankiemandering . it is still mandering. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is certainly too bad that this government did not find it important enough to accept the recommendations of the Redistribution Commission. Just imagine what an insult it is to the members of that commission. The commission was led by possibly one of the most prominent Newfoundlanders that we have in our history today, one of the most prominent Newfoundlanders. With him he had three able and fine men.

When the Premier says that the commission did not take into consideration any history of Newfoundland, hogwash! Mr. Speaker, total hogwash! I would submit to you that the chairman of that commission had more history and was familiar with more history of Newfoundland than any three or four members of this present House of Assembly. That is no discredit to any member of this House of Assembly because the late Judge Higgins was indeed an outstanding Newfoundlander.

To take the commission's report and to completely ignore it is a terrible thing indeed. The commission's report, Mr. Speaker, like hundreds of other reports that this government have received, have been a total waste of time, a total waste of the taxpayers' money.

We have many needs in Newfoundland, thousands of them throughout the communities of Newfoundland and many of them, just \$3,000 or \$4,000 or \$5,000 would solve the problems involved. Mr. Speaker, if the government had no intention of accepting this report, why did they set up the commission and waste all this money? Just imagine, Mr. Speaker, only in March of 1973 the present Minister of Justice when he moved second reading of the bill, just listen to what he said: "I think that this should be regarded as somewhat of an historic occasion in this House because we are and will, if this honourable House approves the bill, take out of the hands of government the possibility for setting the boundaries and the population of the various electoral districts in the province."

Good words, Mr. Speaker. Magnificent words, Mr. Speaker, but unless the government is willing to adhere to these words, they are indeed false and misleading.

The minister goes on to say: "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." Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the Minister of Justice speaking saying that no responsible minister would tolerate or would it be possible for there to be any change in any report that comes from the commission. Here we find, Mr. Speaker, that the present administration including the present Minister of Justice have tolerated severe changes in the last commission's report.

This resolution that is before the House at the present time, Mr. Speaker, is one of the most blatant attempts of gerrymandering that we have ever seen in Newfoundland. Maybe the previous administration and other administrations before were guilty of gerrymandering but they were never as blatant as this attempt of gerrymandering that we have before this honourable House at the present time.

This, Mr. Speaker, in the words of the present Minister of Education of April 25, 1972, is the perfect example of political skulduggery, and that is what the Premier is guilty of, because I do not believe there is any other members of government who took part in this little midnight scratching with the pen. I believe in the local papers when they say "It is an example of Frankiemandering. A perfect example of Frankiemandering."

MR. ROBERTS: A cold blooded job, you might say.

MR. THOMAS: Mr. Speaker, I cannot understand, I cannot see and I cannot respect any member or any minister who would dare support the resolution before this House at the present time. I have a quite a lot of respect for many members on the government side of this House, two or three of them are actually nice guys, some of them are even half decent prominent Newfoundlanders but, Mr. Speaker, to say that we will not put up with any political skulduggery and also to say that the findings of the commission is binding on us all and then to go right against the commission and make something over thirty different changes in the boundaries, to shift names and everything else, it is pure political skulduggery, gerrymandering and Frankiemandering at its utmost.

AN HOW . MPMBEP: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: That is not the issue.

MR. THOMS: May I deal with that, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Bonavista South the other day in his speech said "That he had an objection to the commission's report." And I would submit to this honourable House, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Bonavista South misled the honourable House at that time. Because the objection that he had in this case was not against the second report of the commission, it was against the first report. That objection I agree with wholeheartedly and support because the Island of St. Brendan's has all its connections with Burnside where the ferry lands and with the Eastport Peninsula. So I just want to correct that for the benefit of the Member for Bonavista South.

Mr. Speaker, this is the fall session of the House of Assembly. I almost thought when we were told that the House was going to open last week that the government were going to come to grips with some of the real problems of the people of Newfoundland, the cost of living, unemployment,

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: I am not worried about my own district or any other district. I could not care less where you put the boundaries, and the Liberal Party could not care less where you put the boundaries, but fifty districts in St. John's and one outside and we will still win the next provincial election. We will still win it.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. THOMS: You can do what you like with the boundaries. I could not care less, the principle is involved here.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: The Liberal Party and I will survive with it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: And no matter what happens, how you put the lines, it does not matter, we could not care less.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: We could not care less, we will still win the next provincial

election. It is saying that we will not change the commission's report and then getting down in the Cabinet room with a pencil at the dark of night changing it.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: Criminal. Yes, sure it is criminal. The member for St. John's just said it was so. Definitely criminal.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: I cannot hear him.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: Oh, sure! Indeed I can speak up a bit. I am only started yet.

MR. ROBERTS: There is no trouble in making them hear. It is making them understand.

MR. THOMS: Yes, this is the problem. They say one thing one day and go right against it the next day. So, Mr. Speaker, I thought this honourable House was going to deal with some of the urgent problems of our Province. We have many of them. We have one of the highest costs of living in all of Canada. We have the highest unemployment rate in all Canada. We have many -

MR. J. MORGAN: To a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The honourable gentleman from Bonavista North should be speaking to the relevancy of the bill that we are dealing with now, namely the redistribution of boundaries and not with the unemployment rate and the high cost of living in this Province.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker. The member from Bonavista South either knows or should know that the member from Bonavista North is being quite relevant. He is exercising the normal latitude in debate, giving his reasons why he is opposing this resolution. One of the reasons why he is opposing this resolution is he thinks it should not be brought before this House at this time. I think that is a perfectly valid reason. After all, Sir, it is what 500,000 Newfoundlanders are saying.

MR. SPEAKER: The rule of relevancy is a rather difficult one to rule on. I feel that the honourable member for Bonavista North was straying somewhat from the rule of relevancy and I trust he shall come back to it.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I thought I was being very relevant, very relevant

indeed. So, Mr. Speaker, we have in Newfoundland today forty-one members. Mr. Speaker, it is not really important whether we have forty-one or fifty-one. It is not all that important to me. It is however, Mr. Speaker, very important to the people of Newfoundland and I believe that we should adhere to the wishes of the people of Newfoundland. If one were to go to the far corners of every community in Newfoundland today and ask the question, "Should we have fifty-one?", the answer would be no, definitely no. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, if you asked them should we have forty-two you would find a lot of "no's".

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe the present government should adhere to the wills and wishes of the people. Mr. Speaker, I urge the government, I urge the Premier to reconsider, take into account the cost that this redistribution is going to take. It has already cost, I am told, thousands upon thousands of money, thousands upon thousands of dollars and because the commission's report was thrown aside it has been a complete waste, a complete waste. If one goes to government today and asks them for a few thousand dollars to drill a well in St. Chad's one cannot get it. They will tell you the money is all spent up. But we can throw thousands and thousands of dollars away on a commission to recut up the Province into seats.

MR. MORGAN: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! The ghost of Bonavista South, Rossie's ghost.

Do not worry, Ross will take care of you the next election. He will take care of you the next election. I have been down in St. Chad's more than any other member who has been in that district. I have made more representation to this government for wells for St. Chad's than that Member for Bonavista South knows about.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is your district, you should.

MR. MURPHY: And the Member for Bonavista South gets all the mail

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible)

MR. THOMS: Oh! It is, is it?

MR. F.B. ROWE: At least he does not interfere with another man's district.

MR. THOMS: Oh yes! Yes! Mr. Speaker, while we cannot take care of a couple of wells to be drilled in St. Chad's nor cannot help out a LIP programme in Burnside, while we can promise them \$20,000 in June and take it away in August, we can spend thousands of dollars on a commission and throw it away. Completely wasted. Completely wasted.

Mr. Speaker, there are more important things in Newfoundland for this honourable House to be doing today than to be fooling around with a redistribution bill. So, Mr. Speaker, while we have both ministers on record as saying that we will not change the commission's report, we shall stand by the commission's report, we find that these ministers partake of supporting a resolution that goes deadly opposed to the commission's report. Drastic, Mr. Speaker. This is drastic.

Mr. Speaker, because this is so drastic, may I move the following resolution: (This is an amendment to the resolution) "To strike out all the words in the resolution including the schedule after the words, 'section (15) of the said act are hereby' and replace them with the following:- "Received and the said commission are hereby directed further to consider their recommendations and to submit not later than January 31, 1975, a further report setting forth the boundaries for forty-two electoral districts each of which will return one member to the House of Assembly, said boundaries to be determined

according to the rules and principles laid down in the Electoral Boundaries Delimitation Act, 1973.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. MARSHALL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps we can deal with this tomorrow when we get back to the debate. It is now five-thirty. I wish to give notice that I am rising on a point of order and my point of order will be, and I will be prepared to address Your Honour either now or tomorrow that the resolution is out of order because it negates the main motion, and because it negates the main motion it is therefore out of order. I would be prepared to address Your Honour on it tomorrow if you wish.

MR. SPEAKER: It is five-thirty and I shall recognize the honourable Minister without Portfolio on his point of order tomorrow when this comes up again. It now being five-thirty we shall go with the late show and I recognize the honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, during the oral question period today I put a question to the honourable the Premier concerning negotiations for thirty-nine collective agreements with the government that are due to come up in 1975. I asked the honourable the Premier if it was the intention of his administration to negotiate in good faith with these thirty-nine groups or would there be a provincial general election and they would not get a chance to negotiate.

The Premier just brushed it off, Sir. Brushed it aside. He did not give me a satisfactory answer. Now, Sir, I want to ask the honourable the Premier and he will have five minutes to reply to me just how the sales tax collections are coming. Will there be a deficit? Will there be a deficit of six or seven million dollars as indicated over at Memorial University by the Minister of Fisheries? Will the government be in a position to negotiate in good faith with these groups? Remember, Mr. Speaker, a year or so ago when the present Minister of Fisheries was Minister of Finance, he issued a warning in his Budget Speech to these groups. Is this what the minister is doing

now, Sir? Is he announcing government policy? Is he letting these groups know that there is no money there? That there is going to be a deficit of six million dollars this year? I would like for the Premier to tell us, answer the question, how the sales tax collections are coming, and, Mr. Speaker, I would like for the Premier to tell us whether we are in for a very, very difficult time next year as the minister declared over at the university.

AN HON. MEMBER: Point of order John, point of order.

MR. NEARY: No point of order. I am speaking to the question and I have five minutes. Mr. Speaker,

MR. CROSBIE: On a point of order, John. Mr. Speaker, what is supposed

to be debated here is a question that the honourable gentleman asked the Premier about collective bargaining, whether there will be an election before the collective bargaining took place, not what the Minister of Fisheries was supposed to have said at Memorial University several days ago. This is completely irrelevant.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, really, Your Honour the honourable gentleman is tender because he knows he made a stupid speech and he regrets it. He did make it. The fact remains what my colleague is saying is quite relevant to his point that the Premier's answer was unsatisfactory.

MR. MARSHALL: Now, Mr. Speaker, let me speak just briefly to that point of order. The honourable the member for Bell Island has raised this question and he wants it raised at the adjournment of the House and he is not allowed to wander into all sorts of activity everywhere, all sorts of government activity. He is confined to the question which he asked. He is going on into all areas.

MR. SPEAKER: I feel that during the question period, the matter of what was alleged to have been said by the honourable Minister of Fisheries was dealt with adequately at that time. I must say that the question as posed to the Premier, the relevancy of that is being strayed very far away from by the member for Bell Island. He only has five minutes.

MR. NEARY: The present Minister of Fisheries a year ago did a very poor public relations job as far as negotiations with these groups are concerned, by threatening them. Is this, Sir, now to be another threat, that there is no money, that these groups are going to come in with hat in hand and be sent away, the pot is empty? That is why I asked the Premier, Sir, if there is going to be a deficit this year, if the one cent that was put on the sales tax last year will give a surplus that was forecast by the Minister of Fisheries when he was Minister of Finance.

Now, Sir, the Minister of Fisheries, Sir, the present Minister of Fisheries, as I understand it, left the Finance Department, left Treasury Board - he was president of Treasury Board - he left it, Sir, because he was too cowardly to face these thirty-nine groups. He was

not kicked out, Sir. The minister was cute enough to shift over the responsibility to the Minister of Finance, the member for Fortune. He ducked out. He knew there was going to be rough times ahead. He got out. He took the cowardly way out. He would not face up to it. He took the abuse last year, he is not going to take it this year.

What I want to know from the Premier, Mr. Speaker, is this an indication that the administration is going to be too cowardly to sit down and negotiate with these people or they are going nuts to bring down a budget and call an election before there is another budget presented in the House? Then later, after the budget is presented, after the election is over, increase taxes - is this the strategy of the administration?

I think the Premier, Sir, should answer these questions in the interest -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Oh no, he cannot. The Premier can call an election. Is it the Premier's intention to call an election before a budget is brought into the House so as the administration will not have to negotiate with these thirty-nine groups? Are they going to take the cowardly way out or are they going to face up to their responsibilities? They have over two years left in office and there is no need of an election.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Five minutes have expired. I recognize the honourable the Premier.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, such unadulterated nonsense. Of all we have heard today, this last five minutes had to be unbelievable. The question that the honourable member for Bell Island asked was, is this administration going to face the thirty-nine collective agreements that have to be negotiated this spring or will there be an election or will the administration be too cowardly to face this round of negotiations?

Now, Mr. Speaker, my reply was at that time, it would be either one or the other. The fact is that we most certainly are not afraid to negotiate, far from it. As a matter of fact, we are looking forward to negotiating with the thirty-nine unions that will be dealing with this administration. The reason for it being that even though we are at

a time of high inflation, we do appreciate that the needs of the workers are great when one considers the high inflation. Also I think it must be realized - I think it is realized by responsible groups - that Newfoundland does not have as much money as we would like to have for salaries or for virtually any of the projects that need to be done in this province but we will do the best we can.

The fact is, Sir, that we will be dealing in good faith with these people. I think that the solution will be an amicable one. I certainly hope so because I think it is very important to the province. Mr. Speaker, the honourable member seems to be somewhat nervous of an election. Whether it is next week or next year or the year after, I would suggest that he has every reason to be afraid of an election.

The fact is that he gets up and out of one side of his mouth says, "Are you going to be too cowardly to negotiate by calling an election?". At another time he stands up and he says, "Are you

going to be too cowardly to call an election? The fact is, Mr. Speaker, when the time comes I am sure the honourable member for Bell Island will be running in the magnificent, great district of Harbour Main-Bell Island where he will then find out in his spare time, for the next years until the next election, exactly what it is to negotiate and to do all these things when one is finding a job one has to do.

Mr. Speaker, the answer to the member's question is yes, we are going to carry out negotiations in good faith with the civil service. We are going to call an election at the appropriate time and the people of Newfoundland will be given an opportunity to give either a vote of confidence to this government or to the opposition. We both, I think, on both sides look forward to that day. I think we will look forward to it with a little more relish than some of the others on the other side of the House. Either way, Sir, the fact remains that the remarks and this is an example of what this five thirty late show is going to be, personal attacks, getting away from the subject, just five more minutes of blowing off steam by the honourable member for Bell Island. It is unfortunate that he could not stick to the subject. It is a serious one. Negotiations with the civil service are always serious. The incomes of these people are something of major concern to this government and something, responsibility that this government will not neglect.

MR. SPEAKER: On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, December 6, at 3:00 P.M.