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**VERBATIM REPORT**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 1975**

**SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE M. JAMES RUSSELL**

The House met at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. V. EARLE: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to present a petition from the residents of Rencontre East, Fortune Bay. The prayer of this petition is threefold insofar as the residents are asking for a road to the community, a slipway and repairs to the government wharf. Actually two of these requests should be directed to the Federal Government as the wharf and slipways of course are federal responsibilities.

I note that this petition is signed by some 208 people. But it looks like families signed for all of their children because the writing is very similar and I doubt if all of the signatures are acceptable for that reason. However, the request is genuine from this community. There is no doubt that Rencontre East, being the last remaining isolated settlement in Fortune Bay, the only one that is not connected by road, has quite a legitimate request in asking for a road connection. Unfortunately, I have investigated the cost of a road to that community, which is almost dead centre in the bottom of Fortune Bay, and it would cost several million dollars. The terrain is almost unbelievable. It is mountainous with deep fiords and inlets and to get around these would entail very, very many miles of road.

Possibly sometime in the future the only solution to that particular area is that a road be placed inland, probably as far inland as fifteen or twenty miles to eventually join up the East side and West side of Fortune Bay. This in itself will be a very expensive project and if there are to be branch roads built out to this settlement it would also cost a tremendous amount of money. I have gone into this extensively over the years to try to see if there is any alternative way in which these people could be serviced by road. But in view of the fact that there are less than 300 people in the settlement it would appear to be outrageously expensive and

quite beyond the capabilities of the government at this point. I can support the need of the wharf repairs and the slipway. There are some active fishermen in the area and the facilities which they have there are very poor, although the Federal Government did spend a considerable amount of money some years ago on quite a good government wharf but it has been allowed to deteriorate.

I will support this petition in as far as I can and that is in the light of the explanation which I have made, and will ask that it be laid on the table of the House and referred to the departments, both provincial and federal, to which it relates.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, of course we support the petition presented by the member for Fortune Bay on behalf of his constituents in the community of Rencontre East. It is the first time, I believe, Sir, in this honourable House that I have seen a member present a petition on behalf of his constituents and then half-heartedly support a part of the petition.

MR. PECKFORD: Honesty is not a virtue any more.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, it is not a matter of being honest, Mr. Speaker, but it seems to be most irregular indeed, and I am sure that the minister's constituents will be disgusted when they hear that he did not follow their instructions and support the petition in its entirety. I must say it was very wishy-washy, very weak-kneed and lukewarm, the support that was given. We wholeheartedly support the prayer of that petition. The people, Sir, in Rencontre East are entitled to a road as much as the people in Burgeo, and we are spending a few million dollars every year to put a road down to Burgeo. Why not take these people out of isolation? And we support the petition in its entirety, Sir, and I hope that we will be reported -

MR. EARLE: There are 2,000 people in Burgeo.

MR. NEARY: Well, maybe there will be an influx of population in Rencontre East. It is a good fishing community. Maybe people will go there and settle. Maybe industry will go in there if the country is opened up. And I would submit to the minister that all he has to do is to get the Premier to go down to Rencontre East, take an envelope out of his pocket and scribble a little commitment on the back of it, the same as he did for the Loop Road and then the people in Rencontre East will get their badly needed road.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, if I may, and I am obliged to rise to support the petition in the sense of the need but it is rather strange to me that on many occasions when I sat over there I supported the same petition but the gentleman who now feels that everybody, but everybody should get a road was reclining somewhere in the backbenches. But quite

frankly, I think we see the need, and I must say I admire the honesty and sincerity of the member when he puts forth the case that, yes, a road is necessary - and the road is necessary - but here is the cost to the Province and it is beyond our reach. So I just would say that I support the intent of the petition, particularly if we can assist them with their fishery problems.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any other petitions?

ORAL QUESTIONS:

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

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing could indicate to the House if there is any assistance available to individuals in unincorporated communities who wish to have a well drilled by a drilling rig that happens to be in the vicinity of that area at a particular time? If I can just use a very brief example, Sir, by way of explanation: In St. Barbe North there is a drilling rig up there now, and there are a number of individuals who would wish to have a well drilled for four or five homes but they are not living in an incorporated community, and they are wondering if there is any financial assistance available for groups of individuals in such a situation for the purposes of getting water for their homes?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, in answer to that question, there are two routes that can be followed. Now I might be a little bit wrong in the figure that I am going to give, but

I think there are regulations in the Water Services Division which indicate that if you have seven homes, I think it is seven signatures from a group, that they qualify for one well.

MR. ROWE: Five is the number.

MR. PECKFORD: It is five, is it? It is five, is it?

MR. ROWE: Yes.

MR. PECKFORD: I do not know where I got seven. So, if they have signed a petition requesting a well, right, five householders, and send it in to the department, then it could be acted upon and something could be done. At least we could try to do something. That is one route. But the other route that I prefer is that if they are in a community of twenty-five or thirty householders, right, houses, or thirty or forty or whatever, it is better for them to go the route of forming a Water Committee to deal with the whole community because if you start doing piecemeal, and you get five or six people wanting a well here with one petition, and five or six householders doing it you are destroying the whole purpose of having a central agency within the small community to try to deliver some kind of an artesian well system to them.

So, my own preference is that the honourable member would be well advised if he tried to have his community establish, and it can be done very quickly, a Water Committee, and go that route rather than do it on an ad hoc, piecemeal basis because as soon as you get five or six householders applying for a well, and that is approved, you will have the next five or six householders wanting to do the same thing. So, that is the answer to your question as I see it.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, it does not work. I have been trying it for the past three and a half years. Would the minister give consideration to requests by small groups of individuals where there is a drilling rig in the area at the present time without having to go through all this rigmarole of petitions to the department and what have you because that drilling rig will be moving out within the next few days, and there

are quite a number of individuals who are requesting the services of that drilling rig now, and wonder if there is financial assistance available other than through a Water Services Committee because we have been trying to work through Water Services Committee and they have not been working. It is as simple as that.

MR. PECKFORD: Well, Mr. Speaker, in answer to that, that, in my opinion, the honourable member or the people in his area have not done their homework if the Water Committees are not working, as far as I am concerned. That is number one. To say that there is a lot of red tape connected with that division is also, in my opinion, not valid. This year they are spending upwards to \$800,000 or \$900,000 on unincorporated areas and there is quite a few places in this Province that can boast of a fairly adequate water supply system as a result of efforts by that division.

MR. THOMS: I remember Burnside.

MR. PECKFORD: And secondly - yes, well, there were other factors involved in Burnside as there is in just about every place in Bonavista North, Mr. Speaker, -

MR. THOMS: That is a great system you are bringing forward!

MR. PECKFORD: - because very often that was done ad hocly.

MR. THOMS: We lost \$20,000.

MR. MURPHY: They need a new member.

MR. PECKFORD: So, there still must be at least five signatures on any petition in order for them to qualify for a well and that is what it has to be and that has to come to the division. We cannot just go ahead blindly and okay artesian wells because a rig happens to be in the area and five or six householders want it. You know, it is just as well to do away with the Water Committee and just open the money and let it pour out to whomever wants to come. We have to have a system and hopefully that is as simplistic as can be made.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, we have a system but it is not a water system. That is the problem. Sir, I got a question for the honourable Minister

of Education. Sir, in view of the fact that the government has stated categorically that it will not take over the ownership of the schools and the Harris Report on Education and Human Resources said nothing about School Tax Authorities or assessments and the fact that the Federation of School Boards are now meeting on the problem of financing education in this Province, is the government, the Department of Education giving any serious consideration to what they are going to do with school assessments, number one, and school taxes, number two? Is any serious consideration being given to the possibility of abolishing assessments and school taxes in this Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, at this period when all school boards and indeed the whole educational community has need of additional revenue, more revenue to fulfill its service, and when the limitations on government expenditure because of financial conditions are evidently known



to all intelligent and sensible people, it would be most irresponsible for this government to deny to school boards the certain amount of additional revenue that they can get through either assessments or taxation. So certainly it is not this government's intention at the present time to abolish the rights of school taxation.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the supplementary. The minister must have misunderstood my question. I asked the minister, and I will rephrase it, if he is giving any consideration, his department, to the abolition of school assessments and school taxes, and looking at the possibility that more money can go to the school boards from the general revenue of the Province than through school tax authorities and assessments because of the very high default rates in the collection of school assessments and school taxes, whether it is property or poll taxes. Has the minister's department and officials studied whether or not in fact more money can go to the school boards from the general revenue of this Province than through the school assessment and school tax route? Just analyze the problem.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Education.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, the problem of financing education from all of its aspects, both from the small amount through local taxation or assessments, and from the Public Treasury, is under - and this is no exaggeration to say - pretty much constant review. There is obviously in the financial position of the government, and the financial position of the country, and the general economic and financial period in which we are, it would be highly irresponsible, indeed it could well be financially suicidal for this government to undertake expenditures that it could not in fact finance, to -

MR. F. ROWE: School boards -

MR. OTTENHEIMER: - have to increase the necessity of borrowing a sum which could not in fact be raised on the financial market.

My answer is that it is not at this time the intention of the government to abolish school taxes or school assessments and to fund in

one hundred per cent from the Public Treasury, the Public Treasury now funds approximately ninety-five per cent, and it is not the government's intention at the present time, indeed I do not think it is within the financial capacity of the government at the present time.

MR. F. ROWE: It is the people we are talking about, not the -

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

MR. F. ROWE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I can not - would the minister explain why he says that it would be financially suicidal for the government to try to raise the money for educational purposes, and why it would not be suicidal for the school boards to have to do the same thing and that we are asking the government to do? Because the money is coming from the people's pockets in any case.

MR. CROSBIE: Point of Order!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, this is not a question. This is an argument the honourable gentleman is presenting.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair was about to remind the honourable member that the rule I think, the Standing Order says that the Chair can admit a reasonable amount of supplementaries, plus the fact, of course, that there should not be any long preamble or debate. And I will certainly will permit the member to ask the question, if he wants to be precise with the question. He is getting into a realm of debate.

MR. F. ROWE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another question for the Minister of Education, Sir. Could the minister rationalize why they have stated that they are not willing to consider taking over the physical ownership of the schools in the Province?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, one in Question Period is asked to answer, not to rationalize, philosophize -

MR. F. ROWE: Okay, answer -

MR. OTTENHEIMER: - given lengthy dissertations etc. but to be asked questions and to give answers, What in fact I said was that the government has not decided, had not made a decision to take over the ownership of school property. That is in fact what I said. Now

if the honourable gentleman wishes me to rationalize and give a disseration on it or some such thing then he would have to seek another forum because Your Honour would not allow me to rationalize, but only to answer. I know that I am always rational but that does not mean that at this particular period I am permitted to rationalize but merely to answer rationally.

SOME PON. MEMBER: Oh, oh.

MR. F. ROWE: Sir, he may not be able to give a disseration but he is certainly most disconcerting.

Sir, another question for the Minister of Education. In view of the, you know, financial situation of the school boards, once again, has the minister's department, Sir, or has the minister or the government given any consideration to liquidating the debts of the school boards, just wiping them out -

MR. CROSBIE: Do away with them.

MR. F. ROWE: - do away with them - so that any other money coming from the government

can be used for educational purposes instead of servicing the debts of these school boards.

MR. CROSBIE: How does that affect the constitution?

MR. F. B. ROWE: I am asking the minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. F. B. ROWE: On a point of order, Sir, I am sure the Minister of Education is quite capable of answering any questions put to him by the humble member for St. Barbe North, and he does not need any coaching from the Minister of Fisheries, acting, acting - what is the -

MR. NEARY: Deputy Assistant Premier.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I will answer that on my own when I get a chance.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Honourable members are aware, of course, that when a member is speaking he does have the right to be heard in silence.

MR. F. ROWE: Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Education.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I certainly thank the honourable gentleman for his expression of confidence. Actually, a couple of weeks ago there was a meeting, the Premier, officials of the various school boards, as a matter of fact practically every school board in the Province, myself, the Minister of Finance and some civil servants and at that time or shortly after, within a couple of days after, a small committee was established. We have already met once. We are meeting, as a matter of fact, later today and that in fact is what we are examining, the deficit on current account of various school boards and various actions which government and/or boards can take to improve the situation. Those meetings are still in course so it would be wrong to say anything further other than that we are meeting and we plan to finalize our meetings and hopefully agree upon possible solutions within the next, say, approximately two weeks. I think to say more than that would, of course, not be fair or

acting properly with the people with whom we are now discussing, and they are representatives of the Federation of School Boards.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Sir, one last supplementary. I do not know whether this is hypothetical or not. It is not hypothetical, Sir. Is it not a fact that if you lump together all the individual debts of all the school boards, and even if the government have to borrow in order to liquidate these debts, that it would be less expensive to borrow that lump sum to liquidate the debt than to service the present debts by the individual school boards throughout the Province?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I think now the honourable gentleman is thinking, I would certainly presume, about capital debt rather than current debt because the capital debt would be, of course, a much more considerable amount. The meetings that we are now having are essentially on current account. But certainly what the honourable gentleman says, I think, he must be thinking in terms of capital -

MR. F. B. ROWE: Yes.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: - of capital. I think it would be quite true - the Minister of Finance could correct me on this - I think it would be quite true that if government could, you know, take over the entire indebtedness, whatever it might be, in excess of \$100 million, and finance the whole thing, that the interest rate might well be lower than having, you know, more than one agency. The fact is, bearing in mind the borrowing which the government is going to be required to do during this fiscal year, to support the education system, the health system, the social services system, roads, water, sewerage, the public service, the entire ambit of public expenditure, whether we can add another \$100 million or \$120 million or \$130 million to that borrowing, and from what I understand it would not in fact be possible to do it, that nobody would loan us that extra amount, that it is not a question so even of whether we would wish to, whether we would like to. It is a question of whether we can or cannot. And our financial advisers tell us that there is a certain amount beyond which we cannot borrow. And to have to borrow or to extend the line of

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credit or to incur an additional liability, contingency or otherwise of such an amount would seriously jeopardize the financial position of the Province.

MR. P.B. ROWE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Is the minister admitting before the House, Sir, that the government has reached a limited borrowing capacity at this present time, reached the absolute limit?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, the question is certainly not a supplementary, and it is a supposition. I said nothing of the kind whatsoever.

answering the gentleman's question with respect to the financing of the capital debt of school boards, and that question is neither supplementary nor does it arise from that. And if the honourable gentleman wishes to presume questions on the overall, the question of financing then obviously he should direct them to the Minister of Finance.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. F. ROWE: Well, Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Finance. Sir, has the Province reached the position now where it cannot borrow any more money?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. F. ROWE: That it has reached a limit over its borrowing capacity.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker,

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. CROSBIE: Standing Order 31 (a) deals with oral questions, and it says in these periods questions on matters of urgency may be addressed orally to ministers of the Crown, on matters of urgency. This is not a proper question. It is not a matter of urgency. And it is not a proper question in any event that a question of that nature. It would be the same as saying, you know, when did you stop beating your wife?

MR. F. ROWE: Sir, to that question -

MR. CROSBIE: So I ask that question be ruled out of order.

MR. F. ROWE: To that point of order, Sir. I think this is one of the most urgent questions that has ever been asked in this House of Assembly. When the Minister of Education indicates that we have reached the limit of our borrowing capacity -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. F. ROWE: and gives a - on a point of -

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member should be brief in his point of order and state what it is.

MR. F. ROWE: Sir, I am just trying to point out that when the

Minister of Education indicates that we have reached the limit of our borrowing capacity I can think of no more urgent question to put to the Minister of Finance than to ask him if that is the fact. In fact the Minister of Education referred me to the Minister of Finance, and that I have done. I have asked the Minister of Finance now if it is true what the Minister of Education said, that we have reached the limit of our borrowing capacity in this Province?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: On that point of order, if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Education.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I have been misquoted by the honourable gentleman. I stated to him that if he wished to ask questions on the finances of the Province he direct them to the Minister of Finance. I certainly did not indicate that this Province had reached the limit of its borrowing. I indicated that the financial advisors to the government would not think that it would be in the best financial interest to incur an additional \$150 million or \$140 million or \$120 million for the purpose suggested by the honourable gentleman. And this is quite different from what he alleges me to have said.

MR. SPEAKER: The remarks made between the Hon. Minister of Education and the honourable Member from St. Barbe North are merely a difference of opinion as to the interpretation of what was said. The rule with regards to asking a question which demands an urgent answer is certainly a point well taken. The Chair does not consider the question asked by the honourable Member from St. Barbe North to the Minister of Finance to be one which requires an urgent answer, and thus it is out of order.

The Hon. Member for Twillingate.

MR. H. GILLET: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries. I shall not ask him to rationalize but the answer will, I think, require the same thing. I shall merely ask him why either his department or the government has decided to charge double the rates, all rates doubled on the complexes, some built and some being built, for boats that are not fishing boats, other than fishing boats?



MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. CROSBIE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I will have to check to see whether the facts that the honourable gentleman mentions are correct. But if they are correct it will be a quite simple explanation for it. The Marine Service Centres are built and constructed with public funds for the assistance of our fishermen, and fishermen who have fishing boats. If there are people who have pleasure boats, yachts, cruisers and the like, and want to use these Marine Service Centres then surely they should pay proper rates to use them. The fishermen who have used our Marine Service Centres are going to pay a rate that will not be calculated to meet the cost of operating those service centres. If other vessels come along, pleasure boats come along, then certainly we are going to charge them more and get more revenue to operate the service centres. The whole purpose of them is to assist the fishermen and the fishing boat, and not anyone who has a pleasure craft. We are glad to assist other boat owners, but if they are pleasure boat operators they will have to pay more. But in the meantime I will have to check and see what the rates are.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Twillingate.

MR. GILLETT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In that case then may I ask the minister if the pleasure boat owners or non-fishing boats will be turned down because of lack of space? Will the fishermen's boats have the priority?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes.

MR. GILLETT: If so they -

MR. CROSBIE: The answer to that is yes.

MR. GILLETT: Well, if so, then how can you justify refusing somebody? You have set a rate, if they are willing to pay the rate you cannot turn them down.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, you know, we can - I believe that we can justify the position -

MR. GILLETT: No you cannot.

MR. CROSBIE: - that these Marine Service

Centres are going to have first authority for the use of the fishermen and their fishing vessels in the Province.

MR. GILLETT: That is a different story.

MR. CROSBIE: Now, if a case occurs where we could take a fishing boat or we can take somebody's cabin cruiser, we will take the fishing boat. That will be our policy, because the purpose of the Marine Service Centres is, first, aid to the fishing industry. So I cannot see any difficulty in pursuing or perusing a policy like that.

MR. GILLETT: Mr. Speaker, if I am permitted another supplementary: May I ask the minister how he could refuse the owner of a cabin cruiser if he is willing to pay the rates?

MR. CROSBIE: Simply say, no!

MR. GILLETT: If you say you have a priority, the fishermen come first, that is different, but you have set a rate. If a millionaire goes with a yacht and has the money to pay how can you refuse him?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, we do not intend to refuse any boat owner as long as we have space and facilities there, you know, to afford him the service that he is looking for. All I am saying is that if a case occurs where, you know, the rest of the space is being utilized and you are asked to take a fishing boat, and you can only take one boat, or a cabin cruiser, then we would take the fishing vessel. He would have priority, but we are not going to turn down other kinds of vessels as long as there is room for all. And I would suspect that there will be room for all most of the time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Bonavista North.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, in view of the absence of the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, I would like to direct a question to the Premier. I wonder could the Premier indicate to this honourable House the situation as far as the fires in Central Newfoundland or if the government has approached the federal government or is planning on approaching them for help in relation to these fires?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Premier,

MR. MOORES: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I was just talking to the Hon. Minister of Forestry just a moment ago when I went out and the situation is on the forest fire that whilst they are not totally under control, they are certainly in much better shape today. The fire on Northwest Gander which was of major concern because of its size and its location and in that very heavy black spruce, is now being patrolled by about seventy-five men looking for hot spots but the fact is that the fire is considered to be getting under control right now even though that is not, you know, until now officially been said. The Wood Dale fire on the Botwood Highway is also more under control than yesterday. We have had fairly calm weather and that has helped tremendously in that regard. However they are both still dangerous. The one that went out of control again last night was the Exploit's fire, opposite from Bishop's Falls, and this morning the Price people and the forestry people have over one hundred men, I understand, on the fire and the eight water bombers, four from Quebec and the four provincial water bombers, are all working that one fire. And I think with that sort of an effort today that should come to shape as well.

Regarding the ban on the travel in the woods, the reason that ban was put on, Mr. Speaker, for the information of the House, was to ensure that these three, what could be very major fires, were brought under control. And as soon as they are brought under control, of course, that will be lifted. The reason it was brought on was because if any other fires had started with those three fires there, with just the eight water bombers, the four from Quebec and our own four, it would have been very difficult to get at them as quickly as we could. But it looks now as if, you know, - that we are not saying officially until the fires have been brought more under control than they are now but the possibility is, hopefully, that will happen and that the fires will be brought under control within the next twenty-four to forty-eight hours.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Bonavista North.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health. I wonder could the Minister of Health inform this House if there is either programme within his department or any other government department so that people on long-term assistance could receive, say, dentures through government help?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Health.

MR. WELLS: The answer to that is that I will undertake to find out for the member at the earliest opportunity.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the President of Treasury Board, Sir, can tell us how much revenue the Province has lost due to the liquor store strike?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Industrial Development.

MR. DOODY: No, I do not have the figure with me, Mr. Speaker. The situation, of course, is that some revenue is being lost. It has been offset to a certain degree by the increased beer sales, but I do not have the exact figure with me. I certainly can obtain it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Transportation and Communications, Sir. Glad to see him back in his seat today, Sir. Will the minister tell the House what action has been taken as a result of charges made at a meeting with the minister last week by the international representative of the Bricklayers' Union that they had to employ, the union had to employ a consulting firm because walls were falling down over here in the Health Science Complex and they had to employ their own consulting firm to look into it. What action has the minister taken on that to investigate it, to see if it is correct?

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

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, that action was taken quite some time ago. That was last year and certainly all the charges that were laid at that time were checked out. The report that was done independently by the union, and which we appreciate them doing, was checked out by the officials of the department as well as by the site managers on the site, and every effort was made to insure that the problems that were suggested, that may be there, and there was some question as to if the consultant's report was completely accurate in the eyes of departmental officials or the managing agents of the project, and when these have been taken in hand the problems that were pointed out no longer exist in my information. If you would like to check further on that I certainly will. But as I recall it, these problems have been solved. There was some possibility of danger there and that has now been resolved.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the minister tell the House in his capacity as acting Minister of Public Works, what action has been taken on charges made also at the same meeting between the ministers and the Bricklayers' union last week, that material and labour at the Health Science Complex has been diverted for personal use for building basements in houses, private houses of individuals who are either on management payroll or were on management's payroll at the Health Science Complex, and that employees were sent out to bury a dog? What action has the minister taken on these charges?

MR. ROUSSEAU: I had one charge that was laid at the meeting only, that bricklayers were used. That is the only one. The rest of them I do not know about. The gentleman who laid the charge had what he said was an affidavit and he promised to send me a copy of this affidavit, which I think possibly the honourable Member from Bell Island has. I do not have it yet, or am aware of it. So, all I can do is ask him to send it to me, which he has not yet done but which he said he would do.

In the meantime, I have talked to the gentleman in question and I want to assert again, there is only one gentleman the charge was laid against, in my opinion, as a result of the meeting. That gentleman has written a letter, and I suggested that he would write a letter giving his side of the story, and I do have the gentleman's letter. But I do not yet have the affidavit or whatever other literature was going to be sent to me by the gentleman from the Bricklayers Union. He said he would but I have not received it yet.

MR. NEARY: Well, the matter is under investigation?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Oh! We have a letter from the gentleman on whom the charge was laid with his side of the story. I would now like to have the affidavit. That is what he called it. I do not know exactly what it is, but apparently it is an affidavit. I am waiting for that and the international representative indicated to me that he would send it to me but I have not yet received it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, another question for the acting Minister of Public Works. Sir, would the minister be prepared to table a monthly report that is submitted by Scrivener, the project managers down at the Health Science Complex for the month of February when Mr. Purdy, Scrivener's representative, severely criticized Newfoundland workmanship and Newfoundland labour. Would the minister be prepared to table that monthly report in the House so we can all take a look at it?

MR. ROUSSEAU: I will have to take that question as notice, Mr. Speaker. I was not the minister of the department at the time.

I will check it out and I will undertake to check it.

MR. NEARY: Okay, Sir. I have a question, Sir, for the Minister of Industrial Development. Is the minister aware that Mr. Roland Martin has made a public statement that the government may hold more business luncheons and if so, if the minister is aware of it, would the minister tell us when his Industrial Development circus will take to the open road and where they are going to go this year, what cities and towns and communities and villages?

MR. DOODY: I suspected for some time, Mr. Speaker, that the honourable member was looking for a job in the circus. This is the first formal application we have had and we will certainly consider him, if we do indeed open a circus on the road. I am sure he will be a great hit. We have had occasion last year to have several industrial development luncheons in the United States, entertaining the financial community and some industrialists in the area. It may very well be that we will have several more this year. Plans have not been formalized for them. However, and in that context I feel there will be very little need for the talent of the honourable member and so he probably will not be called on. If it does degenerate into a circus, of course, we will certainly take advantage of his offer.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the minister tell the House what the results

are of last year's dinners, expensive dinners that were held in New York and Boston and a couple of other places, where the Premier was almost out in jail?

MR. DOODY: We were entertained lavishly as guests of the United States Marshals. They greeted us with Valentines, and, you know, we were most gracious to them in return. That in itself was not all that beneficial, I suppose, but it was interesting. It is pretty hard to assess in concrete terms the value of these luncheons.

MR. NEARY: I suppose it is.

MR. DOODY: We do know that the bond issues that were offered for sale in the United States and other areas were sold with a great -

MR. ROBERTS: That was a result of the great legal advice given the Finance Minister -

MR. DOODY: - great ease. They may very well have. Our discussions with these people -

MR. ROBERTS: -- by his son.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DOODY: And our entertaining these people I think attributed in no small way to the success of the bond issues. I certainly hope that they did.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health, Sir. Would the Minister of Health tell the House whether any of this bad meat that we hear so much about in the Province of Quebec has found its way into Newfoundland? And while the minister is on his feet -

MR. DOODY: I thought you were looking for more candy from me.

MR. NEARY: - would he also tell the House if the inspectors -

MR. DOODY: Take the rotten meat from the Liberal Party.

MR. NEARY: - if the inspectors in his department are looking into this matter of milk shakes, you know, that we hear so much criticism about in the last few weeks?



MR. SPEAKER: I will permit the honourable minister to answer it and that will use the thirty minutes allocated for the question period.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, I will answer the last question first.

I have not heard anything about milk shakes or bad milk shakes, so I think we can probably dispense with that. If there is any evidence that there is something wrong, and the honourable member will give it to me, I will endeavour, of course, to find out the answer. But on the question of the tainted meat, I think that is a serious question which is deserving of an answer. I had heard in the past few days -

MR. MURPHY: That is up to the public dogs.

MR. WELLS: - that - I will try again.

MR. MURPHY: I am sorry.

MR. WELLS: I have heard, you know, that some people were worried or concerned lest there had been tainted meat from the sources in Quebec from, you know, who sell this or have been selling this in the past, that had come into Newfoundland. Particularly there was an inquiry received by me from the news media as to whether any of this had found its way into Labrador City. The Department of Health inspector was going to Labrador City and he was given specific instructions to check on this most carefully. He did check and found that none of the meat in Labrador City emanated from any of the firms that were suspected or known to have sold tainted meat in the past. And that all of the meat in the Labrador City area came from recognized firms such as Swifts and Canada Packers, and therefore there was nothing at all to any rumours which might have been going around about in Labrador City.

MR. NEARY: Any horse meat down there?

MR. WELLS: Not to our knowledge. Apparently it was all brought in through recognized firms, as I say, Swifts and Canada Packers. There have been no suggestion at any time that there has been any tainted meat probably in the Island of Newfoundland. So I think it

is quite proper to reassure the public on that point, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MURPHY: Only in the sausages and the puddings, I am not eating them.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, could we just revert to Notice of Motions so we can give notice of several motions.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed by leave to revert back to Notice of Motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed.

MR. CROSBIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On motion of the Hon. Minister of Fisheries to ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act To Revise Existing Legislation Respecting The Fishing Industry Advisory Board."

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Finance.

On motion of the Hon. Minister of Finance to ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act Respecting The Awarding Of An Increase Of Pensions To Or In Respect To Certain Employees Of The Government Of Newfoundland, Certain Teachers And Certain Members Of The House Of Assembly."

MR. ROBERTS: Members of the House of Assembly?

MR. EARLE: Certain members.

MR. ROBERTS: What do you mean, certain?

MR. CROSBIE: Committee, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Better carry that. Sit down!

MR. ROBERTS: It is in order, normally. On first reading it is in order to ask for an explanation. Could the Minister of Finance indicate what pensions are to be raised for Members of the House of Assembly?

MR. EARLE: Mr. Speaker, this act will be explained, of course, when it is presented. But it is only the tidying up of the increases in pensions. So they apply to ex-members of the House of Assembly who are now under pension.

MR. ROBERTS: But they are in a different plan altogether.

MR. FARLE: Yes, they have - this is where this particular aspect of the bill comes in. Some of them, I think, the war services, in connection with war services some of them were involved in.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if I might. Is this in effect a bill to amend the House of Assembly Pensions Act, which is the act under which members are paid pensions.

MR. HICKMAN: No!

MR. EARLE: No, no.

MR. ROBERTS: That is the only act on which a member can draw a pension in respect of his service as a member. If he served as a public servant or as a teacher well then he would get - but that has nothing to do with his service as a member.

MR. EARLE: War service.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Are there any other notices of motion?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I give notice that he will on tomorrow ask leave of the House to introduce a bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Community Councils Act, 1972," and "To Amend The Local Government Act, 1972." That is all, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. CROSBIE: Bill No. 66 (Regulation of Mines).

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Bell Island, I think, adjourned the debate last night.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I pretty well covered what I wanted to say about this particular bill, Sir. I want to congratulate the minister for bringing in this amendment to the Regulation of Mines Act. This particular minister seems to be very sensitive and very conscious, safety conscious, Sir, and I would say that that is a good thing. The minister has the knack of surrounding himself with good advisers, good staff, and the only weakness that I saw in the minister was that yesterday when he was introducing this he was not forceful enough, you know, to suit to my liking. The minister has to learn the art of debating in the House and making -

MR. BARRY: The House Leader has got me under strict control.

MR. NEARY: The minister, Sir, is a smart man, he is a smart fellow.

he is a smart cookie, but he has to learn how to get his point across in the House very forcibly. This is the weakness in the minister and he is learning, he is coming along, he is learning. The minister is learning. But yesterday this is what struck me, it was the sort of weakness in the argument although I do not question the sincerity of the minister. I think he was quite sincere in his remarks but I would have liked to - because there should be no loopholes, there should be no weakness in this legislation at all, Sir. The minister and his officials should be watchdogs, night and day watching over these hot spots, if you want to put it that way, where we have occupational hazards such as you have in Long Harbour.

Yesterday I referred to a report that I had once either seen or was told about - I am not quite sure - where it was recommended that the whole population be moved out of Long Harbour because of the pollution and the health hazards from the phosphorus plant. Now I do not know if this is correct or not, but it is something that really should be looked at very carefully. Because, Sir, the vegetation, the trees are dying in the area. The birds and the bees are dying.

MR. MURPHY: The cigarette trees.

MR. DOODY: How come it did not stop your buzzing.

MR. NEARY: That is right, Sir, the whole countryside is being affected, and it has to, Mr. Speaker, affect the health of the people.

MR. ROBERTS: It is beginning to look like Sudbury. There are no trees around Sudbury, not for miles.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

Now that is one of the real bad situations in the Province. But I think the other real bad one, if not equally as bad it is certainly a pretty close second and that is Baie Verte, the asbestos situation in Baie Verte. Mr. Speaker, so far there has been no evidence in Baie Verte of asbestosis. I hope there never will be. But, Sir, I am very concerned about it. I am very concerned about the men, women and children who live in the community of Baie Verte. Because, Sir, I would say the miners who

are actually digging up the asbestos are safer than the people who live in the community. Now that may sound like a strange statement but asbestos fibres are light, you cannot see them with the naked eye, and they blow around. And I would say, Sir, that there are a lot of little fibres, millions and millions and millions and billions of fibres in the air blowing from the tailings pile, which is three miles away from the community, by the way. And you can go down there and park your car, when the wind is in a certain direction, and get up in the morning and it is like a heavy dew on the windshield of the car, the asbestos, the little fibres on the windshield of the car. I do not know if the minister has ever seen that or not. And this is going down into the lungs of the men, women and children in that community. And as far as I am concerned, Sir, it is something that has to be watched.

very carefully. Not only will you find as they have found over in Asbestos City I think it is in Quebec, is it, where sixty per cent of the -

MR. ROBERTS: Thetford Mines.

MR. NEARY: - sixty per cent of the workers were suffering from asbestosis. But it can affect the men, women and children in the community and -

MR. BARRY: - en Francais

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. ROBERTS: Well, the honourable gentleman opposite can speak en Francais but we prefer to communicate with our electorate.

MR. NEARY: And so we cannot afford, Sir, we cannot afford to be negligent in this very, very important matter. I am only raising these points. I know the minister is conscious of what I am saying. I am aware of that. But there are members of the House, maybe of the general public who are not as sensitive as probably the minister and myself, because I was born and raised and worked in a mining community. I worked with DOSCO for twenty-one years and I lost my job when the mine closed, Sir. I do not know if Your Honour is aware of that or not. Then there is the matter of silicosis again.

MR. BARRY: Then into politics.

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon? - It was a great day, Sir. As it happened I was a member of the House when I lost my job. Then I became a full-time politician. But this matter of silicosis, Sir, is becoming increasingly difficult, increasingly important matter that we are going to have to watch very carefully and we all know now the results down in Labrador City. I do not if anybody has ever seen a miner with silicosis or not. I remember once I knew a man, and after he died they did an autopsy on him to see what he died with and it was assumed that he died with silicosis. His lungs were four times the weight of what they should have been, and this is what happens. Your lungs get corroded and it keeps building up and building up and it does not happen overnight. It takes years. This is why we

have to maintain a close watch now because maybe five, ten, fifteen years you will find asbestosis, or you will find people dying in Long Harbour or in that plant in Long Harbour. You know, Mr. Speaker, the employees, the employees should be watching this themselves because sometimes, and I hate to have to say this, the employees themselves are a little bit too careless. I am told about, I am told about a programme that they had on one of these projects that I mentioned, and I will not say which one it was, where every day because of the health hazard, every day employees in a certain part of the mill had to have a blood test and an urine analysis. They had to get the security to force the employees to go and take these blood tests and to pass in tests of their urine. One smart aleck employee substituted tea for his urine. How can the company in a case like that, Sir, carry out its obligation and its responsibility? It is the responsibility of the company to educate its employees, and maybe that is where they fall down on the job. But certainly, Sir, the employees of these companies should be educated in the dangers and the hazardous conditions under which they are working.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I heard the minister yesterday, and I heard the minister several times say, well, you can reduce the health hazard, reduce it. Now, I do not know, Sir, what is meant by that. As far as I am concerned it should be eliminated entirely.

MR. BARRY: It cannot be done.

MR. NEARY: No, well, the minister says it cannot be done. Well, Sir, it reminds me if you had a car with four bad tires on it, and you put on three brand new tires and left one bad one on, you could go out on the Trans-Canada Highway and get killed. The car is still a safety hazard. As far as I am concerned, Sir, if you cannot eliminate, if you cannot eliminate the health hazards and people's lives are at stake and people are going to die, that kind of an industry, bulldoze it out in the Atlantic Ocean and get rid of it. Maybe that is what should happen to phosphorus plant. Maybe we should send the bulldozers down there. I do not know.



Maybe I am over-reacting, I am too emotional.

MR. MURPHY: About seven years behind the time. That is all.

MR. NEARY: Who is seven years behind the time?

MR. MURPHY: The honourable member!

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, I am not seven years behind the time. I have always -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: I have always felt -

MR. MURPHY: We were over there and listened to you.

MR. NEARY: I have always felt, Sir - But even if I am seven years behind the time, we have an administration now that is committed to rectifying these

matters, and I think the minister is doing the best he can.

Mr. Speaker, now before I take my seat there is one other - I have dealt enough now with the safety aspect of it, and I again want to tell the minister that without hesitation that I personally support this bill. I think it is a good piece of legislation. It is a good amendment, and one of the better pieces of legislation that has come before this session of the House. There is another interesting aspect to the bill, and that is in the explanatory note, the bill would amend the principle act to expand the definition of 'mine' when used as a noun or a verb to include mills and plants in which minerals are processed and so forth, and chambers for industrial purpose, for example, rehabilitation of the abandoned mines on Bell Island for oil storage. Well I hope, Sir, that members of this honourable House will give that section of the bill unanimous approval.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. NEARY: I am all for it, Sir. It is something -

MR. DOODY: For the good of mankind.

MR. NEARY: - it is something that is dear to my heart. It is something that I initiated several years ago, and the former administration, and had Golden Eagle carry out a study at the time to see if the mine was suitable for storing oil. And I have tried desperately, Sir, and I hope that the -

MR. DOODY: The first we heard of it.

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

MR. DOODY: It is news to us.

MR. NEARY: What?

MR. BARRY: I did not know that.

MR. NEARY: What?

MR. BARRY: About the study.

MR. NEARY: Golden Eagle did a study on -

MR. BARRY: Really did?

MR. NEARY: Golden Eagle, really they did. I mean, that is not politics, that is a fact. Golden Eagle did a study on the possibility

of storing oil in that mine.

MR. DOODY: You decided it was better to grow mushrooms?

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, there was just no interest at the time.

The situation has changed considerably because of the energy crisis, the oil crisis in the world, offshore drilling, and all this sort of thing.

MR. HICKMAN: You tell them!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I can tell you the precise time, Sir, that they were considering putting oil and storing oil in the Bell Island mine, It was when that ship( what was her name?) went North, you remember, to Alaska.

MR. ROBERTS: The Manhattan.

MR. NEARY: The Manhattan.

MR. YOUNG: The Norma and Gladys.

MR. NEARY: No, not The Norma and Gladys, The Manhattan.

MR. MAYNARD: The Norma and Gladys - her.

MR. NEARY: The Manhattan, Sir, was on her way and -

MR. ROBERTS: Was not a Newfoundlander captain on her?

MR. NEARY: The Manhattan was on her way and stuck in the ice, and the big problem was if this experiment was a success they would bring the oil down from up North and put it in a place like Bell Island and then transship it in smaller ships, and this is why they were taking a look at Bell Island. It is not the first time that this concept has arisen, believe me. But I am glad that it has come up again because we have desperately tried to find a use for the abandoned Bell Island mines. God only knows, Mr. Speaker, that I have put enough time, punched in enough time trying to find a use for that mine, including growing mushrooms in it, Sir, which members joke fun at, which was not such a bad idea, by the way, a labour -

MR. ROBERTS: We would have had more jobs than they could ever -

MR. NEARY: It would create more jobs if it went ahead - and we could not get the co-operation of the government - it was labour intensive. It would create more jobs than that crowd have created in three years, believe it or not. But they think because its

growing mushrooms it is funny. But it is not so funny. It was proven beyond any doubt that it could be done. The pilot project was a tremendous success. It did not cost the taxpayers of this Province one cent. It did not cost the government one penny, the pilot project. It was done by the Ontario Mushroom Company, the Bell Island Development Association, and it cost me a few dollars out of my own pocket, believe it or not. But I did not mind doing it. If we had gotten any co-operation from the Department of Agriculture or from the government, the Department of Industrial Development or anybody at all that project would have gotten off the ground.

And, Mr. Speaker, we talked about a mining museum similar to the one over in Cape Breton when they abandoned the coal mines over there.

MR. ROWE: Taking in thousands of dollars there now.

MR. NEARY: And attracting tourists, Sir, from all over the world and making thousands and thousands of dollars every year creating a few jobs. Could not get the first base on that one! The Minister of Mines and Energy, I believe, pawned me off on the Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Tourism pawned me off on the National Historic Sites and I got the run-around. I never got to first base, got completely frustrated. I have not abandoned the project, Sir, I still think it is a good idea.

All the items, all the pieces of equipment, everything

In connection with mining on Bell Island scattered around Conception Bay in the homes of men that used to work on Bell Island, on Bell Island itself, should be all collected and put in a mining museum on the Island. Go down a couple of hundred yards, down number four Main Slope and turn it into a tourist attraction so that the tourists can come in dressed up in their oilskins, put on their miners hat and their lamp and their belt and walk down. They love, tourists love going underground and exploring caverns and canyons.

MR. BARRY: Relevancy?

MR. NEARY: Pardon? - This is changing the mine. It is. Going down a few hundred yards, buying a souvenirs, having a cup of coffee.

MR. BARRY: That is in the explanatory notes. It is not in the bill.

MR. NEARY: It is not in the bill. Well, why is it in the explanatory notes if it is not in the bill?

MR. BARRY: It is an example.

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

MR. BARRY: Example.

MR. NEARY: Example?

MR. MAYNARD: For some!

MR. NEARY: But anyway, Sir,

MR. DOODY: Get on with it.

MR. NEARY: I am using it as an example, Mr. Speaker. It is a great idea, Sir, great idea. It is something that I, as I say, I have been pushing for a good many years. Mr. Speaker, I will go as far as to say this, and I want the honourable the Premier - I am sure he is interested in this- that the day will come, Mr. Speaker, the day will come when there will be mining on Bell Island again, when the properties in the world are exhausted, when it becomes more expensive to get the ore out of some of these properties, when they get cut off for economic or other reasons, I would say -

MR. PECKFORD: Fifteen years.

MR. NEARY: Yes, fifteen years. Then the world's supply of iron ore is rapidly dwindling. I would say twenty, twenty-five, thirty

years from now they will be mining iron ore on Bell Island again.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, that DOSCO -

MR. DOODY: Did you not have a contract on the Premier's desk one time?

MR. NEARY: That contract was there, just the same as the sweep that was run in the stadium by my opponent, was there. When DOSCO pulled out of Bell Island, Sir, they had proven fifteen years supply of ore in the ground, fifteen years supply.

MR. ROBERTS: No question of a shortage of ore.

MR. NEARY: No, there is all kinds of ore out under Conception Bay.

MR. YOUNG: What kind of ore?

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon? It is hematite -

MR. ROBERTS: It is the wrong kind of iron ore -

MR. NEARY: The quality - yes, the high phosphorus, high silica content. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, I forecast now that the day will come again Sir, when the companies will be going back and digging out that ore. But in the meantime we have to find an alternative. We just cannot sit back and wait for twenty-five or thirty or thirty-five years when they start mining there again.

MR. ROBERTS: A typical Tory approach.

MR. NEARY: What we have to do is find another use for the abandoned mine. The other day, yesterday, I think, I was asking the minister if he invited himself over to France or if the company invited him over. I was quite sincere. That was not -

MR. DOODY: Ah yes! You were trying to get in a dig!

MR. NEARY: No, I certainly was not, Sir, because if the minister invited himself, well then, that only proves that the minister is trying to do a selling job, which is a pretty good thing. If the company invited the minister to go over, or the minister may have needed a holiday, I do not know, but if the company invited the minister over that would be a different matter because it would show that they are interested. The minister is not just playing politics because Bell Island, the community, is going to be a part

of his new district of Harbour Main - Bell Island.

MR. DOODY: First concession, Your Honour.

MR. NEARY: What is the first concession? I did not put the redistribution bill through the House. I voted against it. I think Bell Island should be -

MR. BARRY: You are conceding the election to him already, are you?

MR. NEARY: No, no, no, no, Mr. -

MR. YOUNG: But you conceded it.

MR. NEARY: No, I said - what I said, Mr. - yes, it is my district too. But what I said was that I hope that the minister is not just playing politics, trying to get a little mileage because if he was, Sir, that would be very cruel indeed. But in the meantime, the possibility is there and it is a good idea to change the legislation if we have to, to find another use for the mines, abandoned mines, like the Bell Island mine. I would also like to see in the bill, Sir, an amendment that would compel mining companies, no matter what part of this Province they are in, to fill in some of these holes that they create and then pull out like they have on Bell Island. We have got some very hazardous conditions on Bell Island, rock piles all over the place that are eyesores, holes full of water, dams. DOSCO should have been made fill them in before they pulled out.

MR. DOODY: Who was in power then?

MR. NEARY: I was not.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. NEARY: I think we had a

Tory there for eight years, Sir. The first representative we had in this House after Confederation for eight years was a Tory representative for Bell Island.

MR. ROBERTS: Then we had Mr. Richard J. Greene.

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes, we had a Tory for twelve years, eleven or twelve years representing Bell Island. It was only when they changed Liberal over there, Sir, and they got a good member that things started to happen, that we got a vocational school and a hospital and road paving, water and sewerage, make-work projects, greenhouses. My God! I could go on and on and on.

MR. DOODY: And still you could not save enough.

MR. NEARY: By 1971 Bell Island was more prosperous than in the DOSCO heyday.

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

MR. DOODY: Excuse me, Your Honour, I am carried away with my new district.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stagg): The honourable gentlemen have succeeded in sidetracking one another. The question of relevance is pertinent at this point.

MR. ROBERTS: Only at this point, Your Honour?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am going to wind down now by asking all members of this House to give this bill their unanimous approval on behalf of the Minister of Mines and Energy. I am so overwhelmed and overcome with this piece of legislation that I cannot help but get emotionally carried away, Sir, because of my background and my association with a mining community. I hope that the Minister of Health will participate in the debate and tell us whether there is any merit to my suggestion that everything in connection with safety, whether it is mines or in mills or in pellet plants be put under one department, under the Minister of Mines and Energy's Department. Take it away from the Workmen's Compensation Board, the Labour Department, the Health Department, put it all under one head. I think that way they can work more effectively and more efficiently. So we are all for it, at least I am, Sir. I am all for this bill. I want to congratulate



the minister for bringing it in, and I would like to see more legislation like this brought into this honourable House.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): The Hon. Minister of Health.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, a few words on this. Obviously I think everybody in this House will support this bill. It is a necessary and good piece of legislation. There may be some peripheral side effects to the bill, such as oil storage for abandoned mines, and it may well be a very good thing but the remarks I would make would be on the health aspect, the whole question of industrial health. The member for Bell Island is correct, I think, in much that he said on this bill. But particularly I think that Newfoundlanders historically have not been concerned with safety matters. I think this is true with the fishing industry where people have ignored safety, our fishermen in small boats. It is a brave attitude, perhaps, but it is also a non-realistic one, and I think this has been carried over to industrial work when even the regulations that plants sought to bring into force that very often have been disregarded by the people who work in them. And I think this is an historical note in this whole matter of regulations. I have to go further and say that I think it is common knowledge in Newfoundland that some of the more recent industrial plants, by recent I mean in the last twenty-four or twenty-five years, have not given the concern to safety that they ought to have given.

And I think it is also fair to make the point in this House of Assembly that some of the results of industrial plants and careless safety practices, especially as regards fibres and dust in the atmosphere which can affect people's lungs, that some of these we all know do not show up until five, ten and fifteen years later. There is the greatest danger, Mr. Speaker. If you go out in a fishing boat and you are in danger at least when you get ashore that evening or at the end of that week or whenever it is the danger is over. But if you are breathing dust and fibres and other substances, which can do harm to your body, the dreadful thing is that you may not find out what harm you have done until five, ten or fifteen or twenty years have passed.

And that is a very serious position. So to put the matter briefly, Mr. Speaker, the policy of the government is that wherever possible and in all respects it is going to move toward even greater safety standards. I think we all recognize this is necessary. The Department of Health advertised, I think it was back, I have been told, back around Christmas or January, advertised for a man, I am not sure what the title would be, but a man to put in charge of occupational health, a man whose duty it would be,

with whatever staff it would be necessary to provide him with, to go around Newfoundland to find out and monitor the hazards, to find out where hazards exist or to confirm where we might suspect hazards to exist and to do something about it.

I have already said in the department in the brief time that I have been there that finding such a man, and I gathered that there were no responses to the advertisement, well I feel, and I intend to pursue this matter further and to make it a matter of some priority so that we can advertise again and get the proper man, and give him the proper staff because it is something that cannot be neglected. And a mine or an installation may appear today to be perfectly safe, yet nonetheless have the seeds of damage to people who are working in it which may not really come to light for another ten or fifteen years. And we owe it, of course, to the people whom we represent to do the best possible job in determining where potential, actual or potential hazards exist and determining what ought to be done about them and to do it.

So that is our policy, Mr. Speaker, and that is a policy that I can assure this House and this Province will be pursued with vigor. And such a person will be advertised for and employed as soon as possible and given this job to do. And, of course, we will ensure that he does it, and that his staff is provided for him to do it properly.

On the question, of course, raised by the honourable Member for Bell Island as to whether or not this all ought to be under one head, perhaps it should, perhaps it should be under one department, whatever department it is, that can do that and have sole responsibility for it, and perhaps that might be a more efficient way of doing it than to have three or four departments involved. And there is no question in my mind that this is something that can be taken a look at. But rather than waiting to make a decision on that I propose, Mr. Speaker, and we propose to go ahead, to get this Director of Occupational and Industrial Health, and second, to work as soon as we possibly can find the man so that the problems can

be identified and steps can be taken at the earliest possible moment to rectify them.

And so, of course, as with most members of this House I have no hesitation in supporting this bill which is timely in every respect.

MR. NEARY: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): The Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not intend to be very long, but there are one or two points which I wish to make with respect to the bill, or more importantly to the matters which grow out of the bill. And like the honourable members who have spoken before me I have no hesitation, indeed I take a great deal of pleasure in saying this is a bill which not only should get unanimous support but I believe will get unanimous support.

But the debate in the House today has been far more important than the narrow material of the bill itself. The bill, you know, as far as it goes is a fairly unimportant piece of legislation taken only on its four corners. But, of course, it has led to a far more important discussion and one which, I think, is entirely relevant to the subject of the bill or Your Honour would not have permitted it to go on, but one which is of great importance to this Province.

Now I am particularly interested in a number of aspects of the educational, no, I am sorry, of the occupational aspect, the occupational health aspect. The gentleman from Bell Island, the gentleman from St. John's South, the Minister of Health, have both referred to this, and I do not intend to go over what they have said. But I would like to speak for a moment or two about the asbestos situation, because I have long been growing increasingly convinced that we are facing a potential, and potential may not be the right word, I think we are facing an actual threat to health at Baie Verte. Potential implies that it may or may not come about. But I think we are facing an actual threat to health. The only question is, how bad it is or how bad it may become if nothing is to be done?

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Baie Verte operation is an asbestos mine, it is an open pit mine. It is exactly analogous in its method of operation to the Thetford Mines operation, or if the Hon. Minister of Energy wants to put it en francais as he told us earlier, the Thetford Mines, but - the Thetford Mines, the Johns-Manville operations in Quebec, the site, by the way, of that famous strike, that great social event the asbestos-strike where Mr. Trudeau and Mr. Marchand and Mr. Pelletier were the prime advisors of the union, although that was twenty years, twenty-five years ago now.

Some time ago the CNTU, the union which represents the men employed at the Thetford Mines, the same union that represents the men at St. Lawrence,

and I do not think it is any coincidence that the one outpost of the CNTU I think outside Quebec - I am not aware they are certified in respect of any local outside the Province of Quebec - the one outpost, the one union local that they have outside Quebec is the Alcan operation at St. Lawrence. Now, of course, the initial reason for CNTU coming there, as I understand it, was that Alcan is a Quebec based company and their operations are in Quebec with big operations at Arvida and it made some sense, since all of the output of St. Lawrence is sent to the Alcan Quebec operations for use in the smelting of boxite into aluminum, it made some sense to have the same union representing them. But, Sir, the connection and the health aspects should not be overlooked because the CNTU, very much in the tradition of European unionism as opposed to the North American or the British variety, they are very much more concerned with social questions and occupational health questions and non-economic questions than are the North American unions. The North American unions historically - it is a spinoff, I think from the United Kingdom situation - tended to be concerned mainly with economic questions. The CNTU, drawing on the European tradition are much more concerned with occupational health questions.

Sometime ago they retained an organization in New York State, in New York City, in fact, to do an investigation on the asbestosis situation or the effects, the health effects of the mining operation in Quebec, in Thetford Mines. And this document has now become public. The only copy of it I have been able to obtain at this stage is en route to Newfoundland but I am told that it is in French and thus of little practical value to me. But I understand it is available in English, and I will get it, and I think the Minister of Health would want to see it and the Minister of Mines and Energy would want to see it if they have not already got it.

MR. BARRY: Yes, yes. Is that Dr. Selikoff's -

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, yes, Dr. Selikoff's study.

Now the report shows, I am told - I am going on news reports and second-hand reports - shows quite conclusively that there is an asbestos-caused health problem in Thetford Mines today. Now that in itself should be enough, Sir, to put us very much on our guard. But, Sir, I think we can go further than that. I have been in touch with Dr. Selikoff himself. In fact, I was in touch with him some little while ago because, as Your Honour will recall, I have raised this matter in the House a number of times. In fact while I was Health Minister I raised the matter, and if the Minister of Health and the Minister of Mines go back to their files they will find, I am sure, copies of memoranda exchanged between the then Minister of Mines, Mr. William Callahan, and myself, and we were not able to resolve the issue. Indeed, perhaps, the minister in closing this debate could speak to this point whether the issue has been resolved because there was a very real issue between what I saw to be the responsibilities of the Minister of Health and what the Minister of Mines saw to be his responsibility.

Quite briefly, Mr. Speaker, it went on for months and with some extremely heated memoranda back and forth, and our deputy ministers at the time, Mr. Gover on the Mine's side and Dr. Miller on the Health side, sort of tried to moderate the difference of opinion and tried to resolve the dispute. It was not resolved when we left office. I hope it has been resolved since. And if so the minister could perhaps tell us just how. But the basic dispute was quite simple. I took the position, which I still think is the correct one, Mr. Speaker, that the Health Department has a responsibility in occupational health as of the moment an operation begins. The position taken by the Mines Department essentially, and taken in good faith, was that the Health Department's responsibilities began only when a problem emerged. And I say, no, that that is not acceptable, that we know now there may be a problem at Baie Verte. We know now there may be a problem at Long Harbour. We know now that there may be a problem in Labrador West. In fact there are problems in all three but I do not think we have to wait. I think that is what happened at St. Lawrence. More than any other cause, single cause, of the tragedy at St. Lawrence in the years from

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about 1935 until 1959-1960 when it began to be realized and accepted by those in authority, more than anything else the fact that nobody was strictly responsible for ensuring the occupational health, or ensuring that the health of men working in those operations was guarded against occupational considerations. So a couple of years ago, in any event, to make a short story



a little longer, Mr. Speaker, I was in touch with Doctor Selikoff. Now, the minister is familiar with him, the Minister of Health maybe, but many honourable members are not. But quite briefly Doctor Irving J. Selikoff is head of the Division of Environmental Medicine at the City University - now that is the City University of New York - City University's Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Director of its Environmental Sciences Laboratory and a pioneer in the field of modern asbestosis - asbestos, I am sorry, epidemiology which I am told is sort of the study of health factors really. It is a very big cumbersome Greek word which I have difficulty pronouncing. But that is essentially what it is. So, I was in touch with Doctor Selikoff. He sent me some information. He also sent me a letter which I think possibly would bring the matter to a point, so I will read the relevant portions of it.

I wrote to him as an individual, as Leader of the Opposition, but as an individual citizen. We have raised the matter a number of times in the House. It has been discussed before in this current House of Assembly but never at the length we have today. We had a very fine speech by my friend and colleague from Bell Island. We had a very good speech from the Health Minister, and the Energy Minister touched upon it and I have no doubt will again when he closes the debate in a few minutes. But I wrote to Doctor Selikoff and I told him we have an operation in Baie Verte, an open-pit asbestos mining operation, that I had heard a little of his work, that I was wondering whether he could tell us, tell me whether there was any possibility of anything going wrong or whether it was just something that we did not need to be worried about.

Well, his reason comes back, "Dear Mr. Roberts: My apologies for the delay in answering your letter. In the press of urgent matters (the possible asbestos hazard associated with contamination of the Duluth water supply) my staff placed your letter in what was meant to be for urgent review but which only recently came to my notice." He goes on, "And I believe you have reason for concern. Studies

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currently in progress in the Quebec asbestos mining area, sponsored and supported by the Quebec Asbestos Mining Association - now, that is a trade association, employers' association - "have demonstrated that more heavily exposed workers have had five times the lung cancer death rate of those more lightly exposed. In very large part, these were open pit mines." Five times the death rate - whatever the odds are of Your Honour as a school teacher and as a sometime politician, dying of lung cancer, they would be five times, five times greater in an open pit operation, a very significant indicator indeed.

He goes on, Sir, "Asbestosis, lung scarring, including fatal disease has been found among the workers studied. Doctor J.C. MacDonald, who was directing this study, believes that there is less serious disease among the miners than among asbestos factory workers or asbestos insulation workers, however." And this is a point made by my colleague. The very serious - it is a fear. I do not - the problem is I do not know whether it is justified or not, but the very serious fear is the one my colleague outlined, and it is a very valid one, that asbestos is an insidious little thing, Sir. It is a marvellous material. It is fireproof. Indeed, it is probably essential in the modern world the way we live and work now. But those little fibres can get carried a long distance by winds and by drafts and they can affect not just people working in mines. You know, for all the tragedy at St. Lawrence, that incredibly harsh human tragedy which the men in St. Lawrence suffered, it was only the men in the mine who suffered. I am told men working on the surface have not contracted the radiation diseases at St. Lawrence, if they had never been exposed in the mines. Certainly, I have heard no suggestion ever, Mr. Speaker, that people in the community of St. Lawrence were exposed to radiation hazards. It was the men who worked in the mines. With asbestos, Mr. Speaker, it is not confined, the threat is not confined to the mine

workers. It could apply to anybody in the area including in particular people living in the area.

Now, Doctor Selikoff goes on, "My own studies have been largely concerned with workers in industry, not in mines. Among them asbestos exposure has resulted in serious loss of life from cancer and asbestosis. My only investigations of open-pit crystalite asbestos miners" - now, I do not know enough about geology, I do not know whether the ones in Baie Verte are - I am sorry, chryaotile, not chrysolite, chrysotile asbestos. But I assume there is only one or two compounds in which asbestos is found in an ore,

the mineral asbestos, but in any event his work was with chrysotile asbestos miners, and that was undertaken among workers at an open-pit mine in California where he examined clinically and by x-ray some sixty-five such miners. The results were worrisome. "I had not expected," Dr. Selikoff says, "to find much disease since the mine and mill were in operation a little over twelve years." Now Baie Verte has been in operation a little over - it was open, Sir, in the Summer of 1965, we are now in the tenth or eleventh year of operation at Baie Verte. "With the high rate of turnover in employment most of the individuals examined had only had five years or so of exposure." That is another point, Mr. Speaker, you do not need a long period of exposure, as a matter of fact there is some evidence in the clinical literature, and Dr. Selikoff sent me a certain amount of it here, one or two years of exposure to these fibres may be enough to cause - it is an insidious, it is a terrible substance in the health sense. He goes on, "yet a significant number had x-ray changed consistent with asbestosis. I was surprised, because, in general," - and this is another important point, Mr. Speaker, "asbestos disease does not generally make its appearance until some time has passed from the onset of exposure. Little is seen in five years, somewhat more at ten." Now again a comment I would make, and I will come back to this because I think this is the key comment, that the disease does not show up in many cases for periods of ten, fifteen or twenty years beyond exposure. And the mere fact that we may not have discovered that none may have occurred now does not in itself say that the men who have been exposed and the people who have been exposed to those conditions are not suffering from a disease. And once the exposure is made, Mr. Speaker, the disease follows inevitably. You know, it is not a matter of chance, as I understand it.

"Little is seen in five years, somewhat more at ten. Lung cancer," there is a word here that I am not sure I can, it is 'mesothelioma,' Does anybody opposite want to take a crack at pronouncing it?

MR. BARRY: Mesothelioma.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, I thank the minister. That is about what I would say it is something like it, meso - it is too bad the gentleman from Carbonar is not here or the gentleman from Humber East. But anyway mesothelioma, whatever it is, that is the actual cancer. It is a new form of cancer they have only recognized in the last very few years, and it is the asbestos-caused cancer. Anyway lung cancer, "that asbestos-caused cancer and severe asbestosis usually do not occur until twenty or thirty years have past following the initial insult." That is a very good use for that word by the way, the initial insult.

"Of course," Dr. Selikoff says "I have no way of knowing whether the conditions of the California mine and mill were worse or better than those which obtained in Newfoundland, and it is therefore impossible to say whether our findings there can be used as a guide to the evaluation of risk in the J.M. Newfoundland operations." Well that is a very fair comment for him to make.

He goes on, "your question" - my question - "concerning the risk in later years is perceptive and correctly pointed. Analysis undertaken by my colleague, Dr. E. Qualler-Hammond, Director of the Department of Statistics at the American Cancer Society, demonstrated that the risk is precisely in these later years. Among asbestos installation workers and asbestos factory workers studied by us approximately one of every five deaths is due to lung cancer. Now that is astonishing figure. I do not know what the rate is among the population at large, but not one in five of the population at large, Mr. Speaker, die from cancer in any form. But here they are, these workers, one in five is due to lung cancer, and almost one in two of one of one or another type of malignancy including pleural, peritoneal mesothelioma etc.

MR. BARRY: Cancer in the chest cavity and the abdominal cavity.

MR. ROBERTS: One in - yes, the pleural one is the abdominal cavity and - I am sorry, the pleural is of the lungs, the peritoneal,

of course, is the abdominal cavity. "Few of these deaths however occur in less than fifteen to twenty years from onset of exposure. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that there need not be twenty years of exposure. In many instances only brief periods of work exposure will suffice, the dust inhaled in six, twelve, twenty-four months remains in the workers lungs from the time of inhalation, exposing his lung tissue to continuing damage even though he have no further work exposure."

Now that is, you know, that is astonishing. I am glad to send the minister a copy of the letter.

MR. BARRY: What is the date of the letter?

MR. ROBERTS: I have had the letter for well over a year, July 1973, nearly two.

MR. BARRY: I find it amazing that you have it for so long and have not passed it on.

MR. ROBERTS: I have - it is not my job to formulate - I have

raised the matter and if the minister, Mr. Speaker, if the minister is now going to stand, if the minister is going to stand and say that I have had this and not sent it forward to him, I would point out, and I will check the Hansards, that we have raised this question in this House on at least twenty or thirty - and as a matter, just last week I had lunch -

MR. BARRY: That is not the point.

MR. ROBERTS: It is the point. I had lunch with a gentleman, at my request, Mr. Layden, Doctor Layden, and Doctor Layden was going at my suggestion to see the minister and I showed the letter to Doctor Layden. This question has been raised in this House a number of times by me and by my colleagues which leads to your next question. What can be done? Much can be done. It should be done as soon as possible to avoid the long term effects noted about. "The asbestos industry engineers have demonstrated that sharp reduction in dust exposure is feasible. Johns-Manville engineers are among the best in the world and I" (that is Doctor Selikoff) and I would have confidence in their ability to do whatever is necessary to avoid dust exposure of the workmen in the mines and the mills."

Now, Sir, he just concludes and he says, "I am enclosing a number of reprints of articles bearing on the general question of asbestos disease." Now, Sir, the Baie Verte situation is not new. The Minister of Health, I do not mean the present minister, his predecessor, had had it brought to his attention by me in the House on a number of occasions. The general thrust of his reply was that there would be a Division of Occupational Health and that the department were looking into recruiting somebody to be the Director of Occupational Health. I would think that that is a difficult task because I suspect there are very few specialists in this field. That was the position taken by his predecessor and the matter, I need make

no apology on this point because I raised the matter, I raised it at least three years in a row on the health estimates. I raised it this year on the health estimates and the last two years. I think the honourable the Minister of Mines will find it was raised on, I do not know on his estimates, but on - yes, I think it was raised on his estimates and also on those of his predecessor, an appropriate time to raise these issues.

If the honourable gentleman wants to have a nasty little political debate I will get into one on that with him because, of course, I -

MR. BARRY: Is that a threat?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I would not dream of threatening the honourable gentleman. I am just saying if he wants to have a nasty little political debate we can have one. My concern is with the situation, the Bale Verte asbestosis situation and it is a concern which we have stated a number of times before and which I now state again. My concern, Sir, is that we do not know what is happening there. The union have raised it with the minister on occasion. I do not know with the present minister, but they have raised it in negotiations on occasion. I do not think they have raised it with the present Minister of Health. He has not been in office long enough to get involved in this. But I would think, and we do not need Doctor Selikoff's letter or anything else to tell us this, the literature which he sent me is public literature, The Saturday Review of the Society, The Nation, a well known American magazine, The New Yorker, 1968, October, 1968. It has all been around for a long time. Most of it I had seen before, in fact.

The fact is that the situation is going on. The minister, I think, has made a step forward in this bill but nothing has yet been done. I would ask the minister - I make a suggestion. I made the same one to Doctor Layden two or three weeks ago with the hope and the expectation that he would pass it to the minister and I assume he did, although I have not spoken to Doctor Layden recently. I do not know what he said to the minister. I do not know what the minister said



to him. I do not even know whether they have seen each other, in fact, although I am told there was to be an appointment, that we, we the government, the people of Newfoundland hire Doctor Selikoff or his institute. It is the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Fifth Avenue, One Hundredth Street in New York, the Department of Community Medicine. I am told they are the best people in the world for this type of investigation. They have the expertise. They have done considerable work in Canada. The Thetford Mines Report was the case in point - to get them to come to Newfoundland, to get them to go down to Baie Verte and see just what the situation is, to see just what the matter is all about, to see whether there is a problem. I fear there may be one and I have no hesitation in saying that I have had that fear for a number of years and

in one way or another I have tried to make it, I have tried to make it come about that the matter could be looked into. I have not checked my files as Health Minister, Mr. Speaker, but I will - it was 1970, 1969, 1971. We left office early in 1972, and this dispute went on between the two departments. The same type of dispute as far as I know was still going on with Labrador City. It has now been confirmed at what? - fourteen men, silicosis has been confirmed, and eleven others -

MR. BARRY: Eleven -

MR. ROBERTS: I am sorry, eleven cases of it have been confirmed and fourteen are on a suspected list. Well, that is not a new problem. I have heard the Minister of Mines and Energy speak on that before. It has been going on for at least three or four years. That matter has been discussed publicly. The union there are very concerned about it. So they should be. The ERCO problem is not a new one. When I was Health Minister we had, the federal Health and Welfare people came down and they made a study of the ERCO plant, and they made a number of recommendations, and I called in the union and gave them the recommendations and I called in the company and gave them the report as I had received it from the federal people. Although I had no legal authority to do so I told the company they had, I think it was sixty days to implement the ones that could be implemented immediately, and the others had to be implemented as quickly as possible thereafter and we took the position - well, they - we did not have to say what would happen if they did not implement it. They said they would and I heard nothing subsequently that they had not and I had reports subsequently that they had done what they had undertaken to do.

So, the matter is not new. The problem is not new. The asbestos one in Baie Verte is not new. But what is needed now, and the minister has raised the entire matter by bringing in this bill, is an attack on it. What is needed, I suggest, is to retain Doctor Selikoff, and I hope, to be quite candid, when I had sent the word privately to the minister, that the minister would get on the telephone to Doctor Selikoff, and for all I know

he may have, I mean, I do not know, but I rather hoped that the minister would seize the occasion and get hold of Doctor Selikoff. I have no executive authority to do it. Indeed, I still put it to him. Say to him, please come down or send somebody down and come and look at the situation and let us know what you think and let us know what should be done and then when we know where we are we can see where we must go. I would suggest that to the minister now. He obviously knows Doctor Selikoff. He is aware of or he knows the name. He is aware of the name. Indeed, he may have been in touch with him. But this man is an expert. The 1968 New Yorker article, I do not read The New Yorker as a rule but I was sent a reprint of the article of 1968, October 12, 1968, and that was the source of the brief description I made of Doctor Selikoff, head of the Division of Environmental Medicine at the City University of Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Director of its Environmental Sciences Laboratory and a pioneer in the field of modern asbestos epidemiology.

So, there it is, Mr. Speaker. I think it is a serious problem. I think it is potentially a serious problem. We have raised it a number of times in the House and if the minister wants to debate this I would be quite prepared to. But I would be somewhat sorry to see the debate turned away from the point of what should be done to help the people involved and to insure that occupational health measures are adequately protected. As I said, I am not even sure that it should be the Minister of Mines who has to take the responsibility for action in this field. I still feel it should be the Minister of Health who should be assigned responsibility. I think it should be resolved. I tried to get it resolved and did not succeed in the time I was in office. Whether or not it has been resolved since I do not know, but apparently from what my colleague from Bell Island says it has not yet been resolved which agency of government is to take the -

MR. BARRY: Not so!

MR. ROBERTS: Well, the minister - I am glad to hear him say that,

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and the minister can tell us when he speaks exactly what has been done. This matter has been debated many times in the House in the last -  
MR. BARRY: The responsibility is shared by two or three departments.

MR. ROBERTS:

In the last three or four years. Well, it has been debated here often. I have never heard a satisfactory answer, because I feel as does my friend from Bell Island that there should be one agency which is the Occupational Health Agency, and it should not be a mining operation, it should be a health operation. And I think it -

MR. BARRY: Your colleague feels the opposite.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, I mean when I was Minister of Health my then colleague the Minister of Mines certainly felt to the contrary, and the memoranda, I suppose, were some of the sharpest memoranda which two colleagues in the cabinet ever exchanged one with the other. They were two very firm and completely opposing positions. Anybody who knows Bill Callahan knows that he is quite capable of taking a strong position and expressing himself with vigor and force. And on my side I took an equally strong position. I still feel that it should be the Department of Health which is responsible. But, you know, I am not so much concerned with who is responsible as the fact that somebody must be.

Occupational health is becoming more and more of a concern throughout North America. There have been a couple of excellent books written on it in the last year or two. But I think it should be a Health responsibility, Mr. Speaker, because I think the mines should be made to - or industry for that matter - should be made to conform to health regulations, and it would, you know, a mine can be mines, and an industry can be industries, and are we then going to have three separate sets? And then what about fisheries, you know, where you have a different type of occupational hazard. You know, I think it should be much like the Workmen's Compensation Board which is separate and which as far as I know cuts across any departmental responsibility, if they feel that something is necessary they have certain authority within their legislation to do it. So I think it should be the Health Department. Whether it is the Health Department or not the Mines Department has an interest and if it

has been decided that they should take the lead in this, well, that is well and good, that is certainly better than the estate where nobody is responsible.

So I have touched on a number of things. I would be quite happy as I said to provide the Minister of Health or the Minister of Mines if he wishes with a copy of any information I have, again an offer I have made before. I never read this letter before in the House, and I make no apology for it, but I certainly referred to the matter, and referred to the subject matter in the letter. It will be interesting to get the Hansards and check it just how many times this matter has come up. It has never come up in such detail as it has today. The problem is there. I do not know whether anybody in Baie Verte is in any way suffering from asbestos-caused or asbestos related diseases. I very much hope not. But at the same time, Sir, and the minister is quite aware of this, he does not need me to tell him, he does not need anybody to tell him, he has indicated that he is quite aware on his own and quite sense of the issues. At the same time, Sir, the fact remains we do not know about the situation in Baie Verte nor are we fully up to date on ERCO. We have had some indications that there are studies going on at ERCO, occupational health and environmental health or environmental studies. There has been no indication that I am aware of exactly what if anything they have disclosed.

The situation in Labrador City- the minister has acted on it and I believe with some resolution and decisiveness. But the fact remains that situations like the asbestos one has been raised a number of times in the House in the last - certainly the three or four years we have been here. And I would suspect the honourable gentleman's colleagues raised it before that when they were in Opposition and we were in the government. And today or last week we have the confirmation of what we all feared all along, that there were going to be dust related conditions.

Well, now we have had enough warning, we have had St. Lawrence, and we have had now this problem, the eleven men with some degree of

silicosis at Labrador City. Let us not have any other problems. Let us act now to take the appropriate action. And I do think that we need a Division of Occupational Health and I think we need one that is fully staffed. The government have been at it now for about three and a half years they have been in office and they have not made any appointments of which I am aware. They have not taken any action of which I am aware in the occupational health field as opposed to a mines safety field. I would like to see some action taken. I would like to see it taken very quickly.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do not know how relevant I have been to the bill. I may have strayed a little on the narrow, you know, whatever the principle is of the bill. But I would thank Your Honour for allowing the debate to take the course it has. I think it is a very good course, and I think it is one that could very much benefit the people of Newfoundland, particularly

the workmen involved. So, I hope we will hear from, I guess we will hear from the minister now. I very much hope so. I hope we will hear from him in a very positive way and exactly what it is because I think he shares the concern, I think we all share the concern in the House, either side, as to what should be done and I think it is now up to the minister to tell us what he is going to get done. He is there. He has the executive responsibility for the time being at least, and while he is there I know that he will want to discharge that responsibility as faithfully and as effectively as he can. So I think now, Sir, he should tell us in a very positive way what he hopes to do and what he intends to do and how quickly it will be done. I think it is much too important, much too important for any other approach to be taken. Thank you.

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

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, if I may take a few minutes to say a few words on this particular bill. I think that it goes without saying that the specifics that have been referred to by honourable members opposite and I am sure honourable members on this side of the House would be quite appropriately and adequately dealt with by my colleague, the minister responsible, but I think that it is incumbent on me on behalf of the people who reside in my district in the city of Labrador City and local 5795 of the Steelworkers' Union there which has shown concern over the discovery of silicosis. I think to say that the suspicions were there for quite some time is one thing, but to have the actual confirmation of it is something that is of concern to people who are working at the Iron Ore Company project in Labrador City. I think it is reasonable to say that within the past couple of years I think that government has made an attempt to come to grips with the problem in Labrador City. At one time or another my colleagues, the honourable the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations, the honourable the Minister of Health, and in particular



the honourable the Minister of Mines and Energy have dealt with the problem when it was raised quite decisively, as the honourable the Leader of the Opposition said. I think that some of the problems that were encountered were some that could not be, could not give us a solution to the problem as quickly as we wanted to, Mr. Speaker, because of the fact that although there was suspicion, until the suspicions were confirmed, and they now have been, and until the actual cause of the problem which has now been found to exist was discovered and I know that the Minister of Mines and Energy expressed great concern over the actual cause of the silicosis. There have been studies going on by the Iron Ore Company of Canada. They had an independent study by the Trudeau Institute people, I believe, of the Iron Ore Company of Canada, one which I have a copy of. The federal people have been working in conjunction with the provincial people and I know that we have had a couple of meetings with the Union Safety Council and with the Iron Ore Company of Canada in respect to it. Again, I feel, it goes without saying that I feel the government has acted decisively in the matter. The Minister of Mines and Energy has written the Iron Ore Company of Canada on a number of occasions and spelled out just what he feels should be done to correct the manner insofar as the facilities are now available to correct them.

I am most pleased that he was able to procure a dust technician for the plant at the Labrador City who will be a government representative on the site, who will constantly monitor the dust levels. It is all right to say, you have the timed analysis of the dust levels. But of course, when you go back and you are talking to people, it is always a problem that when they go in there the dust count may not be what it is an hour later or so on or so forth, so that we have somebody there permanently. It certainly will be of great assistance to alleviating the problems which go along with the dust control

at Labrador City.

Also, we had a meeting recently, last week I believe, no - yes, last week with the Union Safety Committee from Labrador City. Certainly, I think it was their feeling that certain areas of the plan had greatly improved, not all the areas but certain areas. We are certainly pleased with that. I am pleased that the minister has seen fit to enlarge the x-ray programme that is going on to other facilities outside the plant where dust may be a problem. Also, they are looking at x-rays from all people whether they are now presently in either the pellet plant or the mine operation, or if they are outside there and they have been there for a number of years that they are being x-rayed. So, it is a matter of great concern to the people in Labrador City. Naturally, anytime you have a disease like that, especially when the man who is involved does not really know the medical complications in respect to the disease, it is something that is not only physically frightening but also psychologically frightening.

So, hopefully we will be in a position in the near future to be able to put a stop to this

sort of problem. I know for my own part that the Minister of Mines and Energy will be working towards that end. He has my co-operation. He has the co-operation, I think, of all the people in the area and the union at Labrador City. I am sure that we will continue with the dialogue between Mines and Energy and the local union and hopefully some time in the near future that the plant dust problem can be cleared up to such an extent that cases of silicosis will not be something that we expect to encounter over a long period in the future.

So, I would like to put on the record, Mr. Speaker, the cause of concern that the people up there have at Labrador City. Wabush, of course, is a wet system and they do not have a dust problem but the cause for concern of the people in Labrador City -

MR. NEAPY: Is anyone else going to get a chance to speak?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes, yes, I am going to sit down in about two seconds, Sir, when I am finished this if you do not mind.

MR. EVANS: Keep going, boy!

MR. ROUSSEAU: But anyway, in the meantime, I do have to express that on the record on their behalf. Mr. House Leader, when you want to see the enthusiasm they met you in March of 1972 you would want me to do it too, I am sure. They love him up there and I am sure they would want me to, and would want me to have the opportunity to put that on the record. So anyway, Mr. Speaker, I think the government has dealt decisively with it. They will continue to do so and hopefully, as I say, in the near future that the problem can be rectified, the dust counts brought down and the problems that now exist will be something of the past and not something we have to worry about in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable minister speaks now, he closes the debate.

MR. MURPHY: What about the Member for Bell Island, Mr. Speaker?

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see the debate that has been generated by this bill. I think it is a very important topic.

MR. MURPHY: Excluding the Member for Bell Island.

MR. BARRY: I am glad other member recognize this. First of all, I would like to clarify some misconceptions that have developed in the course of the debate. We did look at, very seriously, the question of consolidating this responsibility within one department. We concluded that that was not the proper approach to take because there would be a duplication of facilities, there would be a duplication of personnel, because you are talking really about a number of different responsibilities. On the one hand, the problem of monitoring health hazards, on the other hand, the responsibility of actually going out and determining what the physical conditions are and what the technology is that is available to alleviate any occupational hazards that occur. We worked out, Mr. Speaker, and this is being done by way of Order in Council, a directive has been set out delineating or defining exactly what the responsibilities of the Department of Health, the Department of Mines and Energy, and the Department of Manpower through the Workmen's Compensation Board, what their responsibilities are in these areas. Each of the departments has a particular responsibility. Really there is a joint responsibility, that is what is involved here, Mr. Speaker. For example, the Department of Health, I agree with the Leader of the Opposition, and I very quickly as Mines Minister stated this opinion, that the Department of Health, the Minister of Health should have a continuing responsibility. So this raging debate which apparently went on in the inner sanctums of the previous administration we fairly quickly got out of the way.

I agree that the Department of Health has to have an involvement right from the day an operation starts. But, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Mines and Energy and the mine safety inspectors of that department must also be involved because these are the people with the expertise, with the knowledge. They are the ones that can inform the Department of Health what the actual physical on-site conditions

are at particular times. They are the ones who can monitor dust conditions, for example. They are the ones who can point out when a new piece of machinery is required or when a piece of machinery is not operating properly, so that there is also a continuing responsibility in the Mines Inspection Branch of the department. This is the way we are proceeding, Mr. Speaker, by having each of the relative departments remain involved in the joint responsibility but with their specific responsibilities spelled out by way of Order in Council. This has been done.

It is not correct, Mr. Speaker, that nothing has been done in the field of occupational health since the previous administration left. There was not very much done prior

to 1972, but since 1972 there have been a number of very important factors as I have already pointed out, (1) the setting up of a central x-ray registry, (2) the imposing of a requirement of a pulmonary function test as part of the annual examination of people working in dust related facilities.- these are very important steps - (3) the approval of the position of Director of Occupational Health. Again, unfortunately there has been a delay in filling the post because of events beyond our control, namely, finding suitable people. (4) We have increased the number of mine safety inspectors and technicians who are available for actual monitoring and on site inspection.

And with respect specifically, Mr. Speaker, to the asbestos mine at Bale Verte, this is an area where I have great concern and where all interested parties should have serious concern because of the lack of consensus on the standards that should be imposed, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BARRY: I do not mind the interferring - if honourable members are - I hope I am not interferring with their conversation, Mr. Speaker. The concern I have is due to the lack of consensus in the standards that should be laid down, Mr. Speaker, in the asbestos mine, because we find a difference of opinion amongst the experts as to what the proper standard should be. But I will point out that in this past year, in 1974, as new developments took place in technology and the discussion with respect to the standards, that in Newfoundland, in Bale Verte the Department of Mines and Energy imposed a new standard that is twelve times approximately as stringent as the previous standard had been.

And, Mr. Speaker, this standard has now been laid down for Bale Verte and the company has been given a period of time within which to revamp their machinery, re-design their machinery, get in the new equipment that will ensure that this standard is observed and that the working conditions are properly and adequately monitored to ensure that this standard is complied with.

Now that, Mr. Speaker, we do not agree, or we are not saying that that is the end of that, that we have reached the ultimate, you know, the final stage that everything is perfect in Baie Verte.

MR. NEARY: Close your stockpiles.

MR. BARRY: That is not the case.

Okay! The second point that I will move on to in a minute is the possibility of problems in the community generally. And with respect to that I can say that we have had the, not my department, but the Department of Provincial Affairs and Environment has had the Environmental Protection Services of the federal government involved in a community atmospheric sampling in Baie Verte. They - I think it was March or April this was carried out. The results have not been satisfactory because of the windy conditions at the time, and a decision is being made that a further test is necessary, a further sample is necessary to be carried out by the Environmental Protection Service. And this will be done.

MR. NEARY: Good stuff.

MR. BARRY: Now once that is done we will decide whether any further steps are necessary with respect to bringing in any individuals from outside of the Province or outside of the country for that matter, and whether or not Dr. Selikoff is the person -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I wonder would the honourable minister like to adjourn the debate and call it one of the clock?

MR. BARRY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have one or two brief points to make after the lunch break. I might say that with respect to the need for further investigation this will be determined once we have completed this environmental survey of the community generally, and once we see the implementation of these new standards.

Dr. Selikoff's name, and this is why I referred to my surprise that the Leader of the Opposition has had this letter for over a year, because it was only a coincidence that the name was brought to my attention. I happened to be in Ontario or Quebec at the time of the report -

MR. NEARY: You should have heard of it before.

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MR. BARRY: - well this is about six or seven months ago.

MR. ROBERTS: The Thetford Mines Report.

MR. BARRY: And when the Thetford Mines Report came out it did not get too much publicity even down here in our own papers but they had very extensive coverage up there and I became aware of this gentleman's report. And I instructed the officials of the department to make contact and to obtain the report, and this is now being done.



contact and to obtain the report and this is now being done. We also -

MR. ROBERTS: It will help in the election. You definitely got it. I just checked and we have not received it.

MR. BARRY: We may have it. I am not sure. I have not read it myself. I have not read the actual report. The other thing is that this is becoming a matter of increasing public discussion and debate, possibly generated by a number of books that are appearing recently. I would recommend to all members here one with respect to the St. Lawrence mine, of course, Doctor Layton's book on the St. Lawrence problem called Dying Hard. Another book with respect, mainly directed towards asbestosis which is a very interesting, very informative and a very frightening book, is called The Expendable Americans. I referred earlier in this House several months ago to this book. That is a criticism of the industrial medical complex as -

MR. ROBERTS: Is that a girl Stock?

MR. BARRY: I forget the name but I read out the name of the authors to Hansard and -

MR. ROBERTS: Is it a girl named Stuckless?

MR. BARRY: No, this is a gentleman who wrote this one. But, Mr. Speaker, there is the need for concern about, as far as asbestos is concerned, the possibility of community harm being caused as well because this author in the book The Expendable Americans, and I might add that we do not want to have anybody feel that we consider workers in any mines around here expendable Newfoundlanders like a piece of equipment or a piece of machinery. That is not the approach that any government should take. But, Mr. Speaker, that gentleman pointed out that apparently they had diagnosed cases of cancer and other diseases being incurred, for example, by housewives who had been over a long period of time washing their husbands' cloths that contained asbestos fiber after they came back from working in the mine. It was also over the last year or so a lot of concern about

methods of insulation that had been applied in public buildings and so on where apparently the insulation was putting a lot of asbestos fiber in the air. You know, half the time we do not know what hazards we are going through, health hazards, not only in working conditions but in our own homes.

Anyhow, Mr. Speaker, this is an area where we are concerned. We are not satisfied that conditions have reached the appropriate point in this Province and we will continue to try and insure that the most rigid and stringent and proper standards are applied in the asbestos mine in our Province and in other mines, and that we will follow up with the inspection service with monitoring, and with liaison with the Department of Health to insure that, not that industrial health hazards are eliminated completely, because that will never happen. It is impossible to make any occupation totally safe whether it be from a physical accident point of view or a medical point of view. But -

MR. ROBERTS: There are at least two examples of explosions in the House of Assembly whilst speaking.

MR. BARRY: I had this, as a matter of fact I had it noted, an occupational hazard of politics, possibly high blood pressures.

MR. ROBERTS: Ken Brown had a stroke while speaking.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. BARRY: But, Mr. Speaker, this is an area where we have concern. There are many other points I could make but I think that these are the main points and I ask all members to support this bill.

On motion second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Regulation Of Mines Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently by leave.

MR. SPEAKER: I shall now call it one of the clock and leave the Chair until three of the clock this afternoon.

The House resumed at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! When I left the Chair at one o'clock we had just finished the second reading of bill number (66).

On motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Limit The Financial Responsibility Which May Be Incurred By The Province In Respect Of Newfoundland And Labrador Hydro Without Further Reference To The Legislature." (Bill No. 71).

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, this is a fairly simply bill, I think, straightforward. It is a momentous occasion, of course, in this honourable House to find a government being prepared to tie its hands, as it were, and bring back power to the legislature that at times people fear as being lost to the legislature. But the legislature is the proper place to have scrutiny of a project of this magnitude. This is merely an interim measure. This amount of \$200 million which is being requested here is not an amount that will be spent in this coming year, but it is, in our opinion, the amount that should be put in to give government and the corporations sufficient flexibility to obtain the best interim financing arrangements possible. Before the final project goes ahead, the final financing for the project goes ahead, of course it will be necessary to come back and present a further bill or resolution before this House. At that time, of course, there would have to be complete and full information provided and total debate on all aspects of the matter.

This is merely an interim measure to permit government to get on with the project of the construction of the Gull Island project during this coming year. It has already been stated by me publicly that the expenditures anticipated up to the end of 1975 would be in the order of some \$42-\$43 million. The final, the initial project release for the Lower Churchill project was given as of June 1 of

this year, as of two weeks ago. This merely, or to a great extent, is an alerting of people who will be involved in the project to start keying up, people who are interested in bidding on various aspects of the project, to have them key up their personnel to get ready. The first major contract will not be called until July of this year, early July, which is only a couple of more weeks. But this is the contract for the shafts for the tunnel crossing. The final project release will have to be made in the late Fall of 1975. By the late Fall government will have to make a decision as to whether it is proceeding with the project and whether all the stops will be pulled out and whether government will commit itself totally to the project. At that stage, and not until that stage, will the majority of the commitments commence to be made.

What we are talking about now is with respect to the initial project release, as I said, one or two contracts. But the majority of the commitments will not be made until following the final project release in the late Fall of 1975. I do not think there is anything further that I need add on this but I will be perfectly willing, of course, to answer any questions that may be raised by any honourable members as the debate proceeds.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the minister's speech was brief but was exceptionally disappointing to us, as we had hoped, and I think with some reason expected that he would take advantage of this occasion to tell

the House and the people of Newfoundland something which he has not told them yet, which nobody in the administration has told them yet, and that is just what is happening with the entire Churchill project.

Now, Sir, before I talk for a few minutes on that point, which is very much a part of this bill, let me speak about the narrow bill itself, the words of the bill. It is a very simple act. It is a very short act and it comes in in pursuance of a commitment which the Premier made, in pursuance of a commitment which was dragged out of the government and beaten out of the government, forced out of the government when the Hydro Bill came before the House earlier in this session. And as Your Honour will recall the Hydro Bill gave the government what amounted to unlimited borrowing authority. They could have pledged the credit of the Province to any extent, limited only by some very vague words, some very vague words contained in the Hydro Bill relating to the alleged, the purposes for which expenditures could be made under the guarantees issued under authority of that act.

Well, Sir, we on this side objected strenuously to those provisions in the act. And the points which we made found a ready response. The then Minister of - I am sorry, the now Minister of Health, who then sat as a humble backbencher before ascending to the heights of the cabinet, voiced some deep concerns about this point as did his colleagues the still backbenchers, the members for St. John's East and St. John's North, each of whom had been promoted to the backbenches from service in the cabinet, but all three of them, the three gentlemen whom I have just named, shared a public concern on this. There may or may not have been others of their colleagues who took the point privately in the privacy of caucus or cabinet. That I know not, but these three men did speak in the House as did, I think, all the members on this side, and numerous voices raised throughout the Province from people who are not members of the House.

Now the government did the right and proper thing, and they ~~backtracked~~. They certainly cannot pretend that this was their

original thought, to do so would be dishonest in the extreme, because as an examination of the speeches of the Minister of Energy when he introduced the bill, and the other members of the ministry who spoke, an examination of their speeches as they deal with the point I am now making will reveal quite clearly when the Hydro Bill came before the House originally the government had not the least thought of bringing any further legislation before the House with respect to borrowing or the authorization of borrowing.

Be that as it may, though, I do not want to belabour it, because the fact is now the government are before the House, and they are before the House with a bill which enables the government to raise no more than \$200 million by loans in connection with the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Corporation. And as I read the bill in nontechnical language the government can borrow on the credit of the Province in connection with the Hydro Corporation up to \$200 million, and when that \$200 million has been spent or committed then they must come before the House again.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in itself if that were the sum and total of the matter before the House I for one would be quite prepared to vote for it. I do not want to vote against it. And I will wait and see, and my colleagues will wait and see just what the Minister of Fisheries, I am sorry, the Minister of Energy initially, and the Minister of Fisheries, who I think probably knows as much about this as anybody on the other side and doubtless will get into this debate, what he has to say. And for that matter if we can entice the Premier into the debate, what he will say.

MR. NEARY: We have to get him in the House first.

MR. ROBERTS: But there are some points which we would raise, which I think merit answer, which I think the government must answer if they hope to get the support of the House for this bill.

Now, Sir, the \$200 million figure I would suggest was not arrived at accidentally.

It struck a happy chord in my memory because the amendment which I moved to the Hydro bill which was defeated in Committee stage, an amendment to clause (34) would have provided essentially the same result as would this bill. The government for their own reasons, one can imagine what they were, for their own reasons chose not to accept that amendment. They defeated it on committee and so be it. But the sum I put there was the sum of \$200 million and I said there that, much the same thing, I thought we should have used the resolution stage. The government have chosen this other method and that is well and good. So, in itself, Mr. Speaker, the \$200 million figure does not cause me concern in itself. But, Sir, it does cause me a great deal of concern in the context in which the minister introduced it. The minister said, and I think I quote him accurately, that the government intend by the end of this calendar year to spend about \$42 or \$43 million on this project. Have I the figure correctly? It is -

MR. BARRY: Yes.

MR. ROBERTS: \$42 - \$43 millions. Well, let us round it out at \$50 millions. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a lot of money. It is not a lot with respect to this project. It is about - it is less than four per cent of what this project will cost us by the time it is done, but it is a lot of money. It is enough money to provide water and sewer to almost all of the communities in Newfoundland and Labrador outside the major projects in St. John's and Conception Bay South and Grand Falls and Gander and Clarenville. It is enough money to provide almost all the new hospitals that the government are now talking about. It is enough money to build a great many miles of road, pave a great many miles of road. It is a lot of money. We must be very careful when we talk of the Churchill project with its astronomical large sums, not to lose sight of the fact that while the millions and the hundreds of millions and the billions may roll glibly off our tongues and after a while in debate the familiarity

of \$200 million or \$1 billion or \$2 billion becomes just that, familiarity, and we all know that familiarity breeds contempt, we must be careful that that familiarity does not lead us to the point of view where we forget the fact or overlook the fact or do not take proper account of the fact that the sums of money we are speaking of are immense. This \$200 million, Sir, is as much as the Province will borrow on all its other account this year according to the budget and the legislation authorized by the House. It is a very large sum of money indeed.

The minister tells us he is going to spend \$50 millions this year, the calendar year. Yet he is asking for authority to borrow \$200 millions. Now, I find that offensive, Sir. I think that is wrong. If the minister had told us that he needed to borrow \$200 millions this year, and explained why he needed to borrow it, then I think he could have reasonably expected the support of the House with respect to his bill. But he has not told the House that. Indeed, he makes a speech in introducing this motion that is so short and is so lacking in content and information as to be almost contemptuous of the House and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I would think, Mr. Speaker, the \$200 million figure was chosen because that was the amount I put in my resolution. The government probably said, well, if Roberts put it in his resolution, then we will put it in here. I suspect that is how it was arrived at. I cannot claim any great knowledge that led me to arrive at the \$200 million figure. I chose it because I wanted to make the principle and because it seemed to me to be a reasonable amount within twelve months. But, Mr. Speaker, the government here have chosen a figure that is four times what they intend to spend in this calendar year by their own admission. What this could mean is that we are well into the project before the matter could ever



come before the House again. That is my first point - too much money. This government have time and time again shown themselves careless, contemptuous. We saw the interim supply bill come in - no, I am sorry, the bill to authorize borrowing, and they said they would need \$202 millions and they wanted to borrow \$225 millions. The Minister of Finance, with his usual inept footwork, got himself in some sticky ground indeed in trying to explain that one away

and it had to be amended. The government had to withdraw, and fortunately did the right thing. Even now they have got too much authority. They have got more than they need to pledge our credit. Here they are asking for \$200 millions, \$200 millions and they say they only plan to spend \$50 million. But why will they not, Mr. Speaker, bring in a bill which implements the other principle that I put in that amendment that no grant of authority lasts for more than twelve months. The Churchill project is going to be with us for many years. We, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, are going to end up borrowing more money than the entire debt of this Province now is. We are going to end up borrowing - well, the minister now admits \$2 billion, We are going to end up borrowing more than that, and I will come back to the cost of the project in a moment. Why - it is going to be many years - why then can the ministry not lay down the principle which I submit they should lay down that at least once a year a bill shall come before this House so that the entire matter can be debated? That is a suggestion which I make. It was the point of the amendment which I made in the Committee on the Hydro Bill, and I still feel it is a sound principle. And I would be quite pleased and happy, and I think the ministry would be doing the right thing, if they amended this bill now to provide that when it comes to this matter of authority, that no authority shall last for more than twelve months, and that the government shall come before the House at least every twelve months to report on the project, to say what has been done and what has not been done.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister in introducing the bill threw out the figure of \$42 million or \$43 million. He has not told us what the project - or what that involves. He has not told us where the money is to be spent. You know, Mr. Speaker, they are almost contemptuous beyond belief. There has not been a proper debate in this House yet on the Churchill project. The government have yet to come before the House, a minister has yet to come before the House and give the information. It is comparable only to the Linerboard

project. Do you know that we, the people of Newfoundland, have yet to see the profit and loss statements on the Linerboard project? All we know is that money is being sunk in, another \$25 million, I think, in this year's estimates. There has never been a debate here. There has never been a statement brought before the House. We used to hear such a great deal from them about the Linerboard project. We are now \$70 million or \$80 million over what the Minister of Finance, as he then was, told us would be the final cost of completing the project. And now we are going down the same slippery path with the Churchill project.

The minister cavalierly says the initial project release was given on the 1st. of June. I may have missed something, Mr. Speaker, I often do, and if so I am subject to correction. But unless I am wrong that is the first public statement that has been made on this matter. We, the people of Newfoundland, are now committed, apparently, to a level of expenditure of \$40 million or \$50 million, and the minister almost casually announces it in the House. It is not good enough, Sir. It leads one to the conclusion that it may be difficult to trust this government on this matter, that they are not going to take the people of Newfoundland into their confidence, that they are not going to give them a full and complete and an accurate story.

And then the minister says, the final project release may be given this Fall. Are we to have any opportunity as Newfoundlanders or as a House of Assembly to know exactly what is involved? The minister, when the government bought the Churchill shares, they were talking of \$1.2 billion as the project cost. And at that time I said that my information was that the cost will be \$1.5 billion, \$300 millions more, and the minister scorned that. And then a little while ago, when we were debating the Hydro Bill they were talking of \$1.5 billions. And I said, no that my information was that the project had escalated, we were looking at \$1.8 billion, or \$1.9 billion or \$2 billion. Oh, no, no I was being an alarmist, I did

not know what I was talking about. And now the minister will admit \$2 billion. Well I say that the information I have, and I think the history of this has shown that my information is at least as good as that which the ministry will say publicly, is that this project - we are now looking at a project cost of the order of \$2.5 billion, \$2,500 million before this project is completed. The minister shakes his head and says I am not - I am going to have to pay my share of it and so is the minister.

MR. BARRY: You are not being responsible.

MR. ROBERTS: There has been - as the minister says, be responsible. I am not standing before this House and cavalierly saying, we are going to spend \$42 million or \$43 million -

MR. BARRY: Be responsible!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: - and not a word on what it is going for, not a word. I am not standing before this House and asking for authority to borrow \$200 million and I am only going to spend \$45 million or \$50 millions in the rest of this calendar year. It is the minister and his colleagues who are doing that. I say that the information which I have, which may be wrong, is that this project will probably cost us in the order of \$2,500 million before it comes on stream. I want to know where we are going to get that money. I want to know whether the ministry are prepared to go ahead on a final project release which the minister has told us may come this Fall, which I for one would welcome if it is a responsible decision. The minister talks of responsibility. Well, I say to him will he tell us now whether the ministry will go ahead without sufficient customers being insured and the financial arrangements being insured, because I fear, Mr. Speaker, that this ministry in their desperate anxiety to try to get themselves re-elected are going to put the Province on the hook for hundreds of millions of dollars when they have not got a customer or any financing arranged. That is the fear, and I must say everything I have heard or seen -

MR. CROSBIE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: As Your Honour well knows the debate must be relevant to the principle of the bill. The principle of this bill is to limit the borrowing power of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Electric Corporation and to limit the ability of the government to guarantee borrowings for Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority. That is the principle of the bill and that is the principle that should be discussed. The principle that should be being discussed now is whether the House should limit the authority of Hydro to borrow or the authority of government to guarantee. The subject of the bill is not the Lower Churchill project or what the costs of the Lower Churchill project are or might be or will be. There will have to be other legislation before the House if that project goes ahead.

The principle of this bill is to limit the borrowing of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority who now have the authority to borrow unlimited, unlimited, not limited at all, and to limit the power of government, that government now has, to guarantee borrowings by it and to set a limit on it. That is the principle of the bill and the honourable gentleman is straying quite far from that principle.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, of all the puerile points of order which the honourable gentleman has ever made, that, Sir, takes the cake. The minister in introducing the bill specifically said, one, that this money, or part, or almost all of it will go for the Lower Churchill; two, he spoke of initial project release dates and final project release dates and I submit that nothing, Sir, could be more relevant to this bill than to talk about the Lower Churchill project. This is what the money is for. I will come back to Lloyds River, another albatross that the present Tory Government are going to sink about our neck if they get away with it. But, Mr. Speaker, I submit I am being entirely relevant and I should be allowed to proceed without the Minister of Fisheries harrasing.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Chair certainly feels that there is a specific relevance to the principle of this bill and it is not really a bill which entitles honourable members to a full scale and unlimited debate on the whole project. The Chair is going to watch that very carefully.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Your Honour. I mean I accept the ruling no matter what it is. But I happen to agree with the ruling as well. I think it is well said that this is not a debate on the Lower Churchill. It is a debate on whether we will allow this government, this House will allow this government to borrow \$200 million to be spent on the Lower Churchill. What I say is that I have the fear that this government in their desperate, political anxiety - if ever a bunch - I thought Mr. Smallwood and when those of us who were on that side in 1970 and

1971 were desperate to get re-elected, Sir, we were amateurs compared, pikers compared to the honourable gentlemen who now sit over there to try to get themselves re-elected.

MR. MURPHY: Sit down!

MR. ROBERTS: I do not mind the Minister of Social Services. We all know that he will not be trying to get re-elected.-

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: - and it is well it is so. But I say, Mr. Speaker, that the fear which many thoughtful Newfoundlanders have is that this government will put us on the hook for hundreds of millions of dollars, and this bill is part of it, before there is any debate in this House, before there is any debate in this Province about the cost of the project or the way in which the government are going at it or the financial arrangements.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this money, the purpose of this bill is to provide that we, the Province, it is not any crown corporation. We do not need to get into the argument of whether or not we are legally or morally responsible for the debts of crown corporations. That is an argument in itself and an interesting one - but the purpose of this bill, the purpose of

this act is to allow the Minister of Finance of the Province, the government of the Province, directly to go on the back of these notes. This \$200 million will equal our total borrowing this year for everything else, for roads and schools and hospitals, and debt repayments and fish plants. And everything else on capital account that was spent or will be spent in this fiscal year amounts to about \$202 million on the original estimates. And we are being asked now to approve a further \$200 million, ten per cent of the provincial debt, and the minister has not given the people any explanation. He has not given the House any explanation, either he cannot or he will not. I prefer to believe the latter, because if it is the former then I am even more uneasy then having a minister who does not know as opposed to a minister who knows and will not tell.

Now, Sir, the whole purpose of this bill is to make - the whole purpose of the uprising which came when the government forced through the Hydro Bill and would not accept amendments - the whole purpose of this bill is to make the government account to the House before they borrow money. And now the minister comes before the House and, you would almost, to hear him talk, Sir, you would almost think that this is a very routine little measure, just a nuisance. I can hear him now down in the Hydro Corporation saying, "Well look, you know, boys, we have got to get it through the House but it will not take long. It is just a technical formality. You go ahead, bust ahead, we have given you the initial project release. It has never been approved by the House, but we have put you on the hook now for some millions. We do not need the House. Sure, we got a majority to our backs in there. The boys will not do anything about it." I can hear the attitude now. I can just hear it. I can hear them in Cabinet, "Oh well it is a minor bill. It will go through. We will wait until late in the session. We will jam her through. We will maybe keep her open morning, afternoon and nights. We will try to stuff it through



quickly. And then we will go ahead, we will put it on the hook." And the fear I have is not that we will go ahead with the Churchill project, I hope we will. There is not a person in Newfoundland and Labrador who does not hope that we will. The fear that I have, Sir, a fear which is shared by many, many Newfoundlanders, not all of them of the same partisan persuasion as am I, the fear that I have, Mr. Speaker, is that this government will make a commitment to the Churchill project for political reasons only and not for financial or economic reasons. That we as a government, as a Province will be faced next year or the year after with a decision, "How do we go ahead with the project? We have already spent several hundred millions of dollars." They have not a customer in sight. They may have talked to lots of people. But how are they going to finance it?

We all know, Mr. Speaker. How is this money going to be repaid, this \$200 millions? We all know that financing can be done really only one of two ways, possibly it may take a combination. One is take or pay contracts. That is the way the Upper Churchill was financed, whether it is for good or for bad that is how it was financed. And then we talk of the other way to do it, direct government guarantees. What is the situation? Do the ministry intend that the Lower Churchill should be financed by direct government borrowing? And be it \$2 billions or \$2.5 billions - and I have been right so far on my information, and the minister has not been right on what he has told the House and the people - be it \$2 billions or \$2.5 billions, be it \$2,000 million or \$2,500 million, be it whichever one, Sir, are we to take this on the debt of the Province directly? Our debt now is \$1,600 millions or \$1,700 millions, play around with the figure depending on some of the contingencies, but it is of that order. Are we now to go ahead and add another \$2,500 million or \$2,000 million, \$2 billion to the debt of the Province? Maybe we should. But before we should surely it should be debated in this House. Maybe it should be debated in a greater forum.

The ministry have not told us anything, have not told us where they are going to get the money. How are they going to repay it? How? Are we going to borrow this directly? How are we going to

service it? Out of the provincial revenue? If we guarantee it that means that we guarantee it, Mr. Speaker, and that means that if they have to close the schools to pay the bonds they will do it. That is what a guarantee means, whether it is for this or anything else.

We used to hear a great deal from honourable gentlemen opposite, the Minister of Fisheries used to wax eloquent on, "Oh, the debt of the Province." And then in three years, four budgets, they have nearly doubled the debt. It took Mr. Smallwood and the Liberal Party twenty-three years to get the debt to a given figure. It took the present

government, the Tories, just a little under four years they have nearly doubled it and have little to show for it, little if anything to show for it. And now they come before the House and they want another \$200 millions, and they will not even tell the people what it is for. Mr. Speaker, I do not suppose there has ever been a resource project or any kind of development project in Canada in which government are involved, any kind of government, any party at any level, in which so little has been given to the people by way of information. The minister has said more about Lloyds River than he has about the projects this money will finance. And what little he said about the Lloyds River project was dragged out of him with more to be dragged yet, because there we are headed for another disaster. It is an insane, insane urge to get -

MR. CROSBIE: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. Any discussion of Lloyds River or any project of that nature, Mr. Speaker, is quite irrelevant to the debate on this bill. This bill is to limit the borrowing power of the Authority and the power of government to guarantee borrowings for the Corporation. It has no connection with anything else. The position is that if this bill is never passed the Hydro Authority has the full power to borrow any amount of money it can borrow and government has the full power to guarantee it. So any discussion of Lloyds River diversion or any other proposed project is quite irrelevant to the bill. It is not related to the principle of this bill which is to restrict the borrowing power of the Hydro Authority, which is now unlimited, and the power of government to guarantee it.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker. I earlier said that I never heard a point as puerile as the minister had then advanced. I was wrong, Sir. I have just heard a more puerile point. There could be nothing more relevant to the purpose and the principle of this Bill than to talk about the projects for which it is purported and proposed to raise the money about which we are talking. Your Honour, you go through generations of dependents, and the purpose for which money is to be spent that is what is relevant to the legislation to talk

about, the legislation that sets the authority to spend the money and to raise the money. Your Honour, all of the finance procedure - the minister I realize would like nothing better than not to have the Churchill project discussed, because they are trying to hide something, or not to have the Lloyds River project discussed because again they are trying to hide something. But I would submit, Sir, that all the financial legislation that has ever gone through this House, the debate has been about the purpose for which the money is to be spent, Sir.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to that.

MR. ROBERTS: And I am going to respond to him, Sir.

MR. CROSBIE: As long as the Speaker permits it, you can respond to what you like.

MR. ROBERTS: I am just asking the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, if I might address myself to the point of order. This is not financial legislation, Mr. Speaker. This is not legislation to authorize the Province or the Hydro Authority to spend a cent. This is legislation to put a ceiling on what the Hydro Authority may borrow or on what government may guarantee for it to borrow. It does not authorize the Hydro Authority to spend a cent. Without the legislation it has got full authority to spend what it wishes. This legislation is not financial legislation. It is to put a ceiling on certain borrowing powers. It does not authorize one cent to be spent. The legislation can be passed and if no borrowing is ever done no money will ever be spent. It is not financial legislation. It is not the estimates. And it is not a finance bill. The principle of the bill is to limit borrowing power.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if I may respond to that: The minister is about as wrong as a man can be. The whole purpose of this bill is financial. It says in its title, "An Act To Limit The Financial Responsibility," and he is playing with words, of the worst kind of playing with words. Because what we are talking about here, Sir, is a bill which

would allow the government of the Province, and it says clearly, Sir, in Section (3) to guarantee money. There is a limit placed on the guarantees. Of course, there is. But, Mr. Speaker, the whole purpose of this bill is to talk about the Province's expenditure of money. The government by bringing in the bill, and the minister in introducing it, was allowed to refer to the Churchill and project leases. It is only when the ministry start having the truth brought out that we get these points or order from the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Chair has already ruled once that this bill has certain limitations. The Chair certainly rules now and very strongly rules that reference to other projects such as the Lloyds River diversion and so on is not really relevant at all to the principle of this specific bill. It is not a debate on the whole project and other projects of this Province. And I certainly very strongly remind the Hon. Leader of the Opposition about the rule of relevancy.

MR. ROBERTS: I thank Your Honour but I did not propose to debate the Lloyds River project. I would like to be able to but the ministry are afraid of a debate on it so we will conduct that debate outside the House. But I certainly am allowed to say that I will object to money being spent on the Lloyds River project is it is money to be raised under and affected by the provisions

of this bill. I mean that is not debating - I am not debating the merits of the project or the lack of merits, I am debating this bill. And I am saying why I object to the government's entire approach to this Hydro thing of which this bill represents the prime example. Let me just go over it again because I do not think the honourable gentleman has listened, if so he has not learned. The government, Mr. Speaker, come before us and they say we want to limit the amount of money we can spend, to the \$200 million. In itself that sounds not unreasonable.

MR. CROSBIE: The amount that can be borrowed or the amount that can be spent?

MR. ROBERTS: The amount that can be borrowed by guarantee. The amount that can be borrowed by guarantee.

MR. CROSBIE: Try to be honest!

MR. ROBERTS: And the -

MR. CROSBIE: Deal with the facts!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. CROSBIE: Be factual for a change.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: - the honourable gentleman I would ask be told to withdraw that. There have been a thousand rulings in this session, and twenty in all of the sessions before it, that one honourable member is not allowed to say is what the honourable gentleman just said. Now if he is not asked to withdraw it, that so be, but the rules will be the same for all. So ask him to withdraw it please, Sir.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I suggest to the honourable gentleman -

MR. ROWE: That is unparliamentary.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, of course, it is.

MR. CROSBIE: - I suggested to the honourable gentleman he try to be honest. I now withdraw the suggestion that he try to be honest because obviously he cannot be.

MR. ROBERTS: Fine, Sir. I thank the honourable gentleman. If that is to be the rule of the House -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! The Chair has ruled several times on the context and the use of such words as the word 'honest', and feel that the Hon. Minister of Fisheries was questioning the motives of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and I would ask him to withdraw his statement.

MR. CROSBIE: This is the first time, Mr. Speaker, that I ever heard that you had to withdraw the charge that somebody in the House should be honest.

MR. ROBERTS: Is the honourable minister appealing your ruling, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Well ask him to withdraw it?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: - I withdraw the suggestion that the Leader of the Opposition should try to be honest. I withdraw that suggestion.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if Your Honour is prepared to accept that I do not go any further, except we now have an interesting precedent, and I shall say simply that after the standards of honesty set by the Minister of Fisheries intellectually and politically -

MR. BARRY: That is not relevant, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROBERTS: It is quite relevant. It is quite relevant after the intellectual and politically limits of honesty set by the minister -

HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. ROBERTS: - set by the Minister of Fisheries. I quite expected him to make the statement he did.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The whole matter is developing into what the Chair feels is a personal debate between the Hon. Minister of Fisheries and the Leader of the Opposition. And the statements as to anybody's honesty in this honourable House are not going to be taken lightly by this Chair.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER: And just as the Chair asked the Hon. Minister of Fisheries to withdraw the statement, he is asking the Leader of the

Opposition to do the same thing.

MR. ROBERTS: I withdraw, Sir, in exactly the same spirit as the Hon. Minister of Fisheries withdrew it, and to quote his words, "I accept your ruling that I am not allow to say that he is honest."

May I carry on now, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Leader of the Opposition may continue.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now as I was saying about the bill before whoever it was launched himself into it.

MR. BARRY: Did somebody steal your nipple over the dinner hour?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: I have made a firm resolve not to talk about bottles in the House, Mr. Speaker. And I would say to the honourable Minister of Mines and Energy that after his performance -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: in introducing this bill -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Hon. Minister of Mines and Energy certainly was not procedurally correct in interjecting the comment, and the Hon. Leader of the Opposition may have felt that he was provoked but if he felt that he is still not entitled to respond to those comments. It is not very relevant to this bill.

MR. BARRY: So why blame me.

MR. ROBERTS: It is not relevant, and it is a new doctrine that you cannot respond to provocation in the House, it may be a very good doctrine, Sir.

MR. ROWE: He is leaving to change his diapers.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, he is going out to have his diapers changed now.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to come back to the bill, and really honourable gentlemen opposite are prolonging what little I have to say by these points of order and interjections and what have you. There is a very important principle involved here, Sir. The ministry were forced in to bringing in this bill. They have done it with the best grace they could muster. I expect the Minister of Fisheries will rise to



his feet and give us one of his vintage performances about how they had always intended this. Well, all I will say is that the words of he and his colleagues do not prove that. They prove the direct contrary. The fact is that this bill is now before the House only because the Opposition, both within the Tory Party and without, forced the Cabinet to bring it in. Well and good. But, Sir, in bringing it in the ministry have not told us why they have arrived at the figure of \$200 million. Indeed the Minister of Mines and Energy in introducing the bill told us that they only need for the Churchill project this year \$45 million for the calendar year. Now we all know that the House will meet early in the coming calendar year in 1976 be it at the call of the present Premier or be it at the call of the next Premier of the Province. That remains to be seen. But it can be taken for granted that the House of Assembly, Sir, be it this Thirty-Sixth General Assembly or be it the Thirty-Seventh General Assembly will be meeting early in 1976. So why then are we being asked

to authorize \$200 million in guarantees instead of \$50 million in guarantees? They only propose to spend \$50 million this year, or do they propose to spend more? Why the \$200 million figure, Mr. Speaker? Why the \$200 million figure? I have expressed the fear that the ministry intend to try to commit us and I have given my reason. And I have given what I think is their reason: In their desperate political anxiety, they are going to try to get so deeply into the Churchill project. I think that is wrong. I think they should tell the people of Newfoundland what they want this money for. I think they should tell them why they intend to raise as much as \$200 million and for what they intend to spend it and how they intend to repay it. And they have not told the people this, they have not told the House, they may not even have told themselves. I sometimes think there are only two or three men over there, Mr. Speaker, who have any idea what is happening in the Churchill project. They are not all in the cabinet. Some of them were and some of them are. This bill, Sir, is a sham and a charade. It is not what it pretends to be. It pretends to be a measure to return responsibility to the House. But as I have shown, Mr. Speaker, it is directly to the contrary. It is a measure that will lessen the House's responsibility. It will give the government authority to borrow and to guarantee as much as \$200 million when they only need \$45 million or \$50 million by the minister's own admission. So I say, why is this bill here now? Will the Premier tell us what the bill is about? I hope he will. More than the minister did! Will the Minister of Fisheries be sent into the fray once again to pull the chestnuts from the fire created by the Minister of Mines and Energy?

I think the people of Newfoundland have a right to know. I think the people of Newfoundland have a right to know where we are on the Lower Churchill and the Lloyds River and all the projects for which this money will be spent. The government have not told us anything. Why is there not a Standing Committee of this House, Mr. Speaker, on Hydro expenditures, on the expenditure of the monies to be raised and guaranteed under the provisions of this bill? Why is the limit being set at \$200 million and not the \$50 million they will spend before

the House again meets? These, Sir, are questions which must be answered. And the answers to those questions, Mr. Speaker, will determine how I, for one, and my colleagues will vote on this bill. If the ministry can make a convincing case for \$200 million worth of guaranteed power they should be granted it, but they have not made it yet. They have not told us how the money to be guaranteed will be repaid. They have not told us how they are going to raise it. What is it going to do to the credit of the Province? It is directly going on our credit, this \$200 million which will be authorized by this act, as much money as is being raised for all other purposes this year. Who is going to raise it? Are we going to have another repetition of the Minister of Finance's son and a law firm with which he is connected being retained by institutional investors at the advice of the government?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. MURPHY: Sit down.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, that is not only false it is quite irrelevant to the debate.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, is the honourable gentleman rising on a point of order?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, well, then may I respond to the point of order?

MR. CROSBIE: Why not?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I suggest what I said was not false, and I would also suggest that it is quite relevant. Your Honour, I assume, will want to rule on the point.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): The honourable gentlemen did not give me much time to get my feet wet. I think that if the Hon. Leader of the Opposition were to pursue that particular line any further that the Chair would interrupt him, it is a rather serious allegation that has been made, and there is probably a better forum or other procedure for it. I will listen to the Leader of the Opposition and see if he needs to be interrupted.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Sir.

I had no intention of pursuing it further. And in view of Your Honour's ruling I obviously will not form any intention to pursue it further. But I am saying that we need a Standing Committee of this House to look and to consider the whole Hydro Corporation. We have created a great monster down there, a monster which is not regulated by the Public Utilities Board. We have no idea what salaries are being paid. We have no idea what monies are being spent. We have no idea what fringe benefits may be granted. And here we are now being told that the Province is going to limit its guarantees to \$200 million and then the minister says we will only need \$50 million this year. It is an exercise in hypocrisy, Sir. It is a sham and a charade. It is an attempt to try to dissimulate and to fool. It is not what it should be. The ministry should come before the House and say that here is what we will need this year, and here is why we will need it, and here is the purpose for which it will be spent, and it comes to "X" million dollars and we now ask authority to spend up to "X" million dollars and to guarantee it. But, Sir, the government under this could commit us to \$200 million

for the Churchill project or the Lloyds River project or any other project, and the House has no more say in it. The only way the House will get a say is when this government is turned out and another government has to deal with the situation. The people have no say in it. The thing is very wrong, Sir. The whole approach of the government is wrong, and they are playing for big stakes. This is the same government that came in and asked authority for \$25 million or \$30 million more on a Finance Loan Bill, and now they are asking for \$150 million more, than they say they intend to spend this year. Well why cannot we have another act next year? There is something wrong, Sir. The government have set this \$200 million figure because they are afraid. They do not want the matter debated and that is why we have had these spurious points of order being raised by the gentleman from St. John's West. So I say, Sir, that whether -

MR. WELLS: Cannot the Hon. gentleman enter the debate?

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, I have no doubt that the Minister of Fisheries will get into the debate.

MR. NEARY: Character assassination. He will attack you personally.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, he will doubtless attack me personally but, I mean, I have been attacked by better than him. The point of it is that the Minister of Fisheries - really I would prefer that he get into the debate because he is probably the only one over there who really knows. I would have thought that the Minister of Mines and Energy would know.

MR. NEARY: He is the dirtiest of all.

MR. ROBERTS: Certainly in his introduction of the bill he did not give any indications he knew -

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

The two honourable gentleman have been carrying on a discussion concerning, a very personal discussion, concerning the Minister of Fisheries. And the remarks that I detected and my ears

did not fail me were rather uncomplimentary and the remarks were probably unparliamentary. So I will not ask for retractions at this point but I suggest to honourable gentlemen that it is a tack that should not be pursued.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Your Honour.

If they were unparliamentary I would have no hesitation in withdrawing them. If they were uncomplimentary, I, of course, stand by them, because I certainly did not mean them to be a compliment in any political sense. But as I was saying, I hope the Minister of Fisheries will enter the debate, Sir. I think he could probably tell us a great deal that the Minister of Mines and Energy had not. I had rather thought that the Minister of Mines and Energy would. But I have said pretty well what I want to say. I suspect that before the debate is over some of my colleagues will wish to say a few words in the debate. I think we should hear from the Minister of Fisheries now. Maybe he can deal with some of the points I have put up. And, as I say, my attitude, and I know my colleagues share this, is that whether or not we vote for the bill will depend entirely on whether the ministry can make a reasonable case in support of it. They have not as yet. The Minister of Mines and Energy who has the responsibility for introducing the bill, and who did move second reading, did not make a case that I considered even part way convincing. Perhaps his colleague can. Now let me just say one other thing. We will probably hear somebody on the other side take the tack that by questioning the bill we are somehow against the Lower Churchill. Well I hope they will take it. I hope they will. I hope the Minister of Fisheries will fall into that because that is a very carefully laid out trap, and we will have some fun with him on that one.

So I do hope when he gets up he will give us an example of his - he has got forty-five minutes for a debate. I hope he will devote a portion of them to that. And then there will be one or two of my colleagues who will have a word or two to say about it.

But all I want to say now is that this bill is for too much money. The authority should be limited, but it should be limited to what the government intend to spend in twelve months, and they intend to spend far more than that. We only have a figure for the rest of the calendar year. It is \$45 million they tell us, \$42 million, \$43 million. Let us call it \$45 million, let us call it \$50 million. It is still only one-fourth of the amount here. The House will meet again early next year. It has to meet by the end of March. So why are we to authorize a \$200 million ceiling now? Maybe it should be \$45 million or \$50 million.

AN HON. MEMBER: Move an amendment.

MR. ROBERTS: I cannot move an amendment in second reading. We can move it in committee, and we shall. But why will not the government bring it back before the House each year? What are they trying to hide? And why, above all, when the minister introduced the bill, did he not tell us what the Lower Churchill project is up to? We do not know. Nobody in Newfoundland knows. Nobody in Labrador knows. Nobody outside knows. They are going to spend up to \$45 million to \$50 million. Nobody knows what it is for or how it is going to be spent. The minister probably knows. I believe he does. But he has not taken anybody into his confidence. Above all he has not taken into his confidence the people who are going to have to pay the shot. Because here we are. We are talking quite glibly of doubling the debt of the Province in this year, not doubling the total debt, but this amount, this limit here would double the amount we are

to borrow this year as if somehow we were talking about marbles or bull's-eyes, but we are talking about one of our most precious resources, and one of our rapidly dwindling resources, our credit. Our credit is strictly limited. If it is to be used for one purpose it cannot be used for another. We must be very careful where we use it. It may well be that the Lower Churchill is the place where we should use our credit.

MR. NEARY: You are going to get it now when he gets up.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, I have no doubt, He is up, he is up, in which case your turn - my colleague from Bell Island will expose him and demolish him. The Minister of Fisheries can - my one regret is that I have to go and make -

MR. CROSBIE: I will answer you.

MR. ROBERTS: - an airplane to Stephenville, and I will not be able to hear everything he says, but I will read it.

MR. NEARY: I will take care of him for you.

MR. ROBERTS: Your Honour will be doubtless pleased I am off to Stephenville.

Mr. Speaker, the position really is quite simple. The government have not made a case. They have not been responsible. The Minister of Mines and Energy would like to think I am, we are irresponsible. Nothing would be less accurate or further from the correct state of affairs. It is the government who are being irresponsible. It is the government who are plunging us into millions of dollars without a word of explanation or a word of defense or justification. The minister, Sir, has come before the House and asked for \$200 million, asked for authority. He says "We will limit it. We will limit it to \$200 millions - four times what they intend to spend. Four times what - no, Sir, not four times what they intend to spend, It may be what they intend to spend, but four times what he said they will spend for the rest of this calendar year. He made a weak case, a very bad case. I thought he could have made a better one. I hope his colleague will,



or maybe even the Premier will get into this. I welcome the Premier back to the House. I am delighted to see him again. I hope he will get into this debate because it is probably the most important single thing this administration has done. And I suspect when he sits home at night and thinks of the monuments and the accomplishments of his years in office, be they few or many, that the Churchill project he would like to consider is one of the greatest. And I can see that, I think that would be a reasonable thing.

MR. NEARY: The Hon. the Premier gets an assist on that one.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh more than an assist, and there will be others from time to time will get an assist on it.

But, Mr. Speaker, this bill before the House is a sham and a charade and hypocrisy, and it is an insult to the House and to the people of Newfoundland. It is not a limit, Sir. It is not a limit on expenditures.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please! Now the word 'hypocrisy', 'hypocrites' is unparliamentary. While the Hon. Leader of the Opposition refers to the bill it has to by implication refer to the gentleman who introduces the bill. So I bring this to the Honourable member's attention. It has been said a couple of times in the last couple of days. No point of order has been raised on it. And again I raise it more as a point of information for honourable members for their future guidance that the hard and fast rule may soon have to be made because once we open the flood gates who knows what will come out.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Your Honour. And I shall be guided by Your Honour's kind advice, and is "an exercise in duplicity" - do you think that is - what we really need, Sir, is a style book, you know, a long list of words which are in order and which are not. I must say the Chair in this session, Sir, has had to write new chapters and definitions. And, you know, if a word is not parliamentary, of course, it should not be used. And it is Your Honour's decision as to what is or is not parliamentary.

But as I was saying the bill, Sir, is a sham and a charade. It does not do that which they purport that it does. I submit, Sir, that the bill should not go through in its present form unless and until the government can make a case in support of it. They have not. Perhaps another minister can. Perhaps the Minister of Fisheries can do the job which his colleague failed to do. I invite him to try it. I invite him to talk to us now. He has been making a few notes there, and I know he knows a lot about the project and the Hydro thing and all of that. And I think he probably is in a better position to be able to say what this is about. Well I hope he will.

MR. NEARY: He gave away the Upper Churchill and now he wants to give away the Lower.

MR. ROBERTS: Because I think we are going to wait, and I think we should wait and see what the minister says. And as I said a number of my colleagues hope to enter into this debate and have a few words to say. And what will be said will depend largely on the Minister of Fisheries approach. He is now going to talk about giving away the Upper Churchill - well you can have a crack at that.

MR. NEARY: I am already.

MR. ROBERTS: and expose that for what it is.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is wrong.

MR. ROBERTS: That is parliamentary, is it not, Sir, expose it for what it is?

MR. NEARY: Do not say "hypocrisy".

MR. ROBERTS: I am sorry?

MR. NEARY: You cannot use the word "hypocrisy".

MR. ROBERTS: No I am not allowed to use that, but you can certainly expose a matter for what it is.

And if the honourable gentleman gets off with his usual falderal about the Upper Churchill and the intellectual chicanery of saying that somehow the price of energy has escalated and men who did not see that ten years ago should have been responsible for it, well, I would invite him to say that ten years ago if anyone of us, Sir, had gone out and bought an oil well with oil at three dollars a barrel, think how wealthy we would be today with oil at twelve dollars a barrel.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! Yes, he left out a comment of the Minister of Fisheries as to the relevancy of this. The honourable member's debate is not pertinent, although I must say I was intrigued by it and lulled into a sense of - I was lulled in any event.

MR. ROBERTS: I thank Your Honour and I am sorry if I was lullabying. But I just wanted - I have always regretted that none of us knew ten years ago, Sir, what would happen to the price of oil or energy. Think how wealthy we would all today, nearly as wealthy as the gentleman from St. John's West.

Now, Sir, I think I have said what I wanted to say on this. I had hoped to be able to support the bill, but really until the ministry make a case in favour of it I do not see how we can support it. I think the ministry have got to tell us why they have set the limit at \$200 millions. The Minister of Mines and Energy in a most inept speech, a most inept explanation certainly did not tell us that. So, I would ask the Minister of Fisheries if he would tell us exactly what the government are up to, why they set the limit at \$200 millions? What are they going to use the money for? These are all relevant matters, Sir, and all matters which should determine the fate of the bill.

I would like nothing better than to see everything connected with the Churchill project, Sir, have the unanimous support of the House because it is a big project, it is one which can affect every Newfoundlander. But, Sir, this ministry are going about it

in a way that is calculated not to obtain the support of every member of the House or every Newfoundlander. All over Newfoundland now, Sir, people are raising very serious questions about the method in which the ministry are going at it, about their ends and the competence with which they try to achieve those ends. Those are fears which should be allayed. If the Minister of Mines and Energy could not do it, and he did not, then perhaps the Minister of Fisheries can.

So, we will hear what he has to say, Sir. Then we will decide how we are going to vote. We hope to vote in favour of the bill and if the minister could make a case, fine. If not, we will only be able to vote in favour of it if the limit is reduced still further. Sir, it is a very solemn and basic principle of parliamentary government. The House must control expenditure and credit and all matters affecting credit. If we just give the government this grant of power beyond that which they need, Sir, we will have given away something which we should not have given away. I for one do not intend to be part of that, Sir. I fought against the Hydro bill. We did not carry the day in the House, did not expect to, thirty-one outvote eight. But, Sir, there will be a greater forum at another time and another place and I shall fight against it there too.

So, let us hear what the minister has to say, Mr. Speaker, and we will abide the result and judge ourselves and act accordingly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): The Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment is rising on a point of order.

MR. DOYLE: Mr. Speaker, I just noticed that the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture has returned. I understand that he was out where the action is, where they are experiencing some difficulties with forest fires. I was wondering if we could have leave of the House at this time, Mr. Speaker, to hear a report from the minister on the situation at the time.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I would ask really whether we have a

new House Leader in the government. But I mean I would be as interested, I think any honourable member would be to hear. If our smoke begrimed Minister of Forestry, the Smokey the Bear of the present ministry can tell us what was up, I think everybody in the Province is intimately interested and concerned.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): The Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. ROBERTS: The government has fallen - - -

MR. COLLINS: Am I the new Premier? Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity which -

MR. ROBERTS: No, he is.

MR. COLLINS: - which has been provided with the -

MR. NEARY: Has it burned to the ground out there now?

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please!

MR. COLLINS: - with the approval of the Opposition. I did not really expect this but let me say two or three things which are important possibly. and that is that I just came back from Gander after flying over the fires, the main fires which are on the Northwest Gander area, Greenwood Brook and Coopers Brook. People who are familiar with the woods know it is good moose hunting country and good forestry country. That is a fire which has been burning on approximately a ten mile front, a depth of about three or four miles. The other major fire is what we call on the boards. The officials were in charge of this, they refer to it as the Wood Dale fire which is a fire started, if anyone is familiar with the country, in the Wood Dale farming area, and that fire raced through the country

about nine miles in about two hours to within about two and one-half miles of the community of Botwood and Northern Arm, Peterview region down between Peters River and Northern Arm Brook. The third major fire is across the Exploits River, about midway between Grand Falls and Bishops Falls. When I say midway, possibly a little bit closer to the town of Grand Falls. Now that is bordering on the river and burning in an area which was logged about ten years ago, a lot of new growth, a ten year growth there but a lot of slash, of course, on the fire as well. That fire has not crossed the river but still poses a great threat to that section of the country. To come back to the Northwest Gander River fire, that fire did skip the river, not skip the river but skipped across the river by reason of flame hitting some of the islands. There are a lot of islands in that particular section of Coopers Brook, Greenwood Brook and eventually it got across and that was a major concern to everybody, of course, but that was dealt with two days ago, and we have contained the fire now to the Coopers Brook area, Southside, Westside of the Northwest Gander River.

On Saturday I was in Central Newfoundland. I went out Friday afternoon and I was there Saturday, Sunday, Monday and just came back. And on Saturday we were very much concerned for a number of reasons. It is our first year provincially in having the responsibility for forest fire fighting. And while the three major fires were burning there were fires starting just about all over Newfoundland from St. Anthony - there was a fire in St. Anthony, one at Main Brook, in Hare Bay, White Bay. There were fires at Stanhope, Brown's Arm, Lewisporte, on Change Islands, Fogo Island, St. Brendan's, Traytown, a couple in St. George's and one at McIsaacs on the West Coast, and the Wabush fire in Labrador. As you know we imposed a ban on travel restriction, and we really had no choice. If we are going to be responsible at all in trying to deal with the three major fires, we felt it was necessary to impose a ban because if the fires kept popping up in various places across the Province then we would not be able to concentrate on the major fires, because we would have to

fragment our efforts in terms of directing water bombers in response to people whose homes were threatened and so on and mainly the other fires were in the vicinity of smaller towns. And in Traytown for instance the fire burnt clothesline poles and clothes lines and the back porch and so on of houses but fortunately there was nothing too serious. So the ban was put on for the simple reason that we had to direct our full attention on the three major fires. And I can tell you that about the three major fires right now, as of this moment, I just left Gander and came in in a water bomber, in fact, which had to come to St. John's for-I do not know if it is a 400 hour check or whatever it might be, But the check can only be done down here, they tell me, which I will have to look into because those checks should be done in Gander, but that is another story. Anyway Mr. Carroll, who has been heading up the organization in Gander, he is our regional man out there, and Mr. Hoddinott who is in charge of regional services and Mr. Bennett and others flew over the fire this morning - I did not see it this morning myself - and they tell me now that the Northwest Gander fire - we are reluctant to say it was under control but we will say that that is pretty well contained. Bowaters have 125 men there. I might say, Mr. Speaker, that we are receiving the maximum co-operation from the paper companies, Bowaters and Price. Bowaters have 125 fresh men on that one, and we have the water bombers there. And the Wooddale fire, we are also classifying it as being well contained. And we can only go that far, because one never knows what might happen especially after an experience yesterday, which I will tell you about. But those two fires are well contained.

Yesterday we thought the same thing but the Grand Falls fire, the Exploits fire, opposite Grand Falls, last evening about four o'clock there was, what we say in Newfoundland, a draft of wind from the East'ard and that was enough to put that fire completely out of control again.

But we had the water bombers on that and we contained it and this morning it is still under control for all practical purposes. We have nine water bombers - we will have nine - we have eight now, and we will have nine on it tomorrow morning, there is eight on it today. And there is an increased number of men from the point of view of Bowaters and Price. And a lot of them are men who are fresh. Now some of the fellows are getting tired, They have been on the fire for some days as you know.

The regional forecaster in Gander tells us now that there will be some shower activity this evening, and shower activity only, not heavy rain. It is calm in the area, which is a godsend again. The forecast for tonight and tomorrow is scattered shower activity, but tomorrow afternoon with winds picking up from the North about ten or fifteen miles an hour, which could be a threat unless it is dampened by rain, drizzle, fog or whatever. And generally speaking Northerly winds are damp winds.

So we are optimistic that we might be able to control them. But in terms of the forest ban as there has been some, not necessarily controversy, but a lot of people, I suppose, who want to go in the woods, and I can appreciate that, there are a lot of people in Newfoundland who like to go fishing, who like to go out and have a picnic, and God knows we do not have too many months in the year when we can do it, and when the good weather comes the people would like to do it. But I would like to appeal to the people again, and stress upon them the urgency of the situation, and the urgent need for us to be able to concentrate on the three major fires which are in the wooded area of the Province and could very well become a threat to the communities, stress on the people that the ban will have to stay on unless there is a change in the weather. If there is a good change in the weather we might be able to lift it quickly, but certainly it will be on for all of this week, and it is only early June yet, and after we have looked at the situation on the weekend we certainly will consider lifting it maybe in some areas that we can lift at all with the Province. But as it is now it is a very volatile situation.



All the forestry people are working their backsides off. Bowaters and Price are co-operating to the maximum. All the people are offering their services on a volunteer basis, the R.C.M.P. are involved and others. As it is now it looks like it is pretty well under control but then again, as I said, no one ever knows because while it looks good now there could be hot spots. The fire has gone into the ground to a considerable extent because of the dryness, the brooks are normally dry, the rivers are down, and we can only hope for the best and we are prepared as much as we can to deal with it.

I might say also that I would like to extend our thanks to the Government of Quebec. They have responded favourably. We asked them for two water bombers, which they delivered quickly. We asked them for two additional bombers on Monday which they responded to quickly. They have also sent in a spare crew, because the crews can only work those planes eight hours at a time, and in order to make maximum use of the equipment, of the airplanes it was necessary to have some additional crews on stand by. All in all these people are doing a great job and we are really appreciative to the Government of Quebec for the quick action, and in combination with our own bombers they are doing yeoman service, and please goodness, as I have said, the thing is under control.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we thank the minister for his report on bringing us up to date on the forest fire situation in the Province. And if the minister needs any moral support, Sir, as far as the ban, the restrictions of people travelling in the woods is concerned, we approve of the minister's action. And we know that the people appreciate the fact that while there is danger of forest fires, major fires breaking out that the government, the minister does not have any choice, so if it will make him feel any better we approve of this decision and we know that it will only last as long as there is a danger of fires occurring and that the restriction will be lifted, you know, at an early date as possible.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): The Hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I must first say to the honourable gentlemen of the House that we will not wait with bated breath to ascertain whether or not the Opposition are going to vote in favour of this bill, because we have already gotten from the Leader of the Opposition's remarks that the general drift, the general theme, that, of course, the Opposition are for the Lower Churchill project but there is everything under the sun wrong with it. And their suspicions are greatly aroused by it, and their enthusiasm is certainly very muted. So we will not wait with bated breath to see whether or not the Opposition votes for this bill, as we know very well that the Opposition is not going to vote for the bill.

the honourable Leader of the Opposition was making his remarks it greatly reminded me, Mr. Speaker, of the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus, because certainly there has not been a greater conversion since that date than the honourable Leader of the Opposition who sat in this House, and in the government in this House for five years before this government got in office, which had no limit whatsoever on what that government itself borrowed or on what that government guaranteed, absolutely unlimited, unlimited. All power of borrowing, guaranteeing loans was in the hands of the government in which that gentleman was a member. At no time that we know of did he protest or resign in protest against this abhorrent principle. He is now so great an advocate of that principle, now that he is out of office, that he does not want to support this bill because it suggests a limit of \$200 million on the borrowing of the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority. He conveniently ignores the fact, Mr. Speaker, that from 1965, when the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission was formed, until 1972, when we came into office, the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission had unlimited borrowing powers. It could borrow whatever money people would lend it. There was no ceiling.

During that whole same period the Government of Newfoundland had the power to guarantee without any limit whatsoever any amount that the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission wished to borrow, that the government approved of. They did exercise that power. I would say that between 1965 and the end of 1971 the Roberts Government, the government of which he was a member, the Smallwood-Roberts Government, I suppose Mr. Smallwood had a part in it, -

MR. THOMS: What about the Frankie and Johnny government?

MR. CROSBIE: - that government authorized and guaranteed the borrowing by Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission of at least \$200 million. Now, I have not had time to check that. They authorized and guaranteed the borrowing for the whole Bay D'Espoir project and for

everything that was spent by the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission in those six years on power development in Newfoundland and Labrador, an amount well in excess of \$200 million without any reference whatsoever to the House of Assembly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when there is a bill before this House, a revolutionary new departure, and the bill, it does this. It places a restriction on Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority so it cannot borrow whether from the banks or on the bond markets or from any source, it cannot borrow from the date this bill is passed in excess of \$200 million without coming back to the House of Assembly to have the House of Assembly authorize it to borrow more. Now, there has never been that restriction on the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission or Power Corporation or the Hydro Authority before. So it means that once they have borrowed either through the bank or by way of bonds or however they borrow, up to \$200 million, they can borrow no more until they get the consent of this House. That is the principle of the bill. The bill does not authorize the Hydro Authority to spend one cent. Not one cent does this bill authorize being spent. It does not mean even, the bill does not mean that \$200 million will be borrowed, Mr. Speaker. There may be borrowed under this bill up to \$200 million. There may be borrowed by, say, next January \$50 million or \$100 million or \$120 million or anything up to \$200 million. We do not know what will be borrowed. The only amounts that the Hydro Authority will borrow, and the only amounts which they will have our guarantee for will be amounts that are absolutely essential for them to continue to provide hydro and steam fired power on the Island of Newfoundland and for them to get the Lower Churchill project started in Labrador.

So they will not be authorized to borrow anything in excess of what they actually need. That might be by next Winter if the Lower Churchill project goes ahead, gets final clearance, it might be, it

could be that by January or February this might be up to \$200 million. We do not know, but we have to have a limit set somewhere and \$200 million seems to be the most reasonable limit.

So the bill does not authorize any borrowing. The bill does not authorize any borrowing, Mr. Speaker. All that bill does, it does not authorize spending a cent. It does not authorize borrowing a cent. All it does is place a restriction on the Hydro Authority as to what it can borrow and place a restriction on the government as to what it can guarantee. That is what the bill does. Yet the honourable Leader of the Opposition tries to pretend that it is something much different, something much more sinister, some iniquitous principle and we all heard his remarks. This from a gentleman who when he was a member of government had no objection to government having unlimited borrowing power or the Power Commission

or any number of other agencies of government. Now I am not going to get excited about the Leader of the Opposition. One gets use to the approach he uses in debates in this House and the kinds of little pieces of nastiness that are used. For example he ended up with some kind of sneer about somebody being as wealthy as the gentleman from St. John's West. That is the kind of thing that the Leader of the Opposition gets on with.

MR. NEARY: That is a statement of fact.

MR. CROSBIE: That is not a statement of fact. It is an irrelevant statement, Mr. Speaker. You know these kinds of sneers and jibes are something that unfortunately you just got to endure in this House and try to retain your cool and wonder just what is the defect of character in the person who constantly uses that kind of jeering and sneering and a gratuitous insult that goes on. What kind of sickness causes it? So I will ignore that but I just wanted to mention it because it is another illustration of the kind of nastiness that we have come to expect from the Leader of the Opposition who in that position expects some day to be Premier. And I can only say, God help us! If that honourable gentleman ever gets to be Premier, God help the people of Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. EVANS: You need not worry about that.

MR. CROSBIE: Now, Mr. Speaker, to deal with some of the points that he has raised. The Leader of the Opposition ended up saying or trying to make an eloquent plea that no more power should be given to the government as though this bill is going to give the government power. What this bill does is the exact opposite. It cribs and confines the Hydro Authority and the Government and takes away power they now have and restricts it. That is what the bill does. So honourable gentlemen opposite can hardly vote against this bill because they do not want to give the government any more power. If they vote for this they restrict power the Government and the Hydro Authority now have, that is what they do.

Now to get back to this, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Mines and Energy when he introduced this bill did not go into any long and detailed harangue about the bill because the bill is quite simple, the bill is quite simple. And it was suggested that he should be succinct. He was succinct. There has never been a project about which the public has been told so much as the Lower Churchill. There is no new news on the Lower Churchill project, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Mines and Energy when he closes this debate will add a few details in response to any questions that are brought up. The public has been told through a speech made by the Minister of Mines and Energy and on other occasions a full report of the update progress on the Lower Churchill. The Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority had an official ceremony opening, the new start of business of the new Authority about a month ago at which few details were given, where the public was told of the escalation in cost that the latest estimate of the cost is now \$1.8 billion or \$1.9 billion or whatever the latest estimate is. And who knows, Mr. Speaker, it might end up when the five years are over being \$2 billion or it might end up being over \$2 billion, in excess of \$2 billion. No one can tell you for sure. No one can tell us for sure now what the rate of inflation is going to be in the next five years. No one can tell us for sure what construction wages are going to be and so on and so forth in the next five years. All you can do is get the experts to give you the best prognosis they can.

Now let us just make one comparison to the Tar Sands project in Alberta, the one that all the fuss was about and which the federal government is involved in now. What is the name of that one, minister?

MR. BARRY: Syncrude.

MR. CROSBIE: Syncrude Tar Sands project was supposed to cost \$600 million when it was first suggested two or three years ago, and now the Government of Canada is involved in it and other parties had to get out because the cost has gone over \$2 billion. That

is the estimate of the inflation and the increase in costs in the last two years. The point is that while the Lower Churchill project and any other project, hydro project, may be escalating in cost because of inflation, all the alternative means of generating power are escalating to an even greater extent and the Lower Churchill is still our best alternative for power here in Newfoundland. So, yes, there has been escalation, there has been escalation in every project in the world that you can even think of in the last several years. But the experts still tell us that the project is feasible and sensible and the only proper course for this Province and for Canada, and that it is in the national interest. And the House knows that the Government of Canada is committed to pay half the cost of the transmission lines and all this has been discussed before and may even involve itself in the project for much more than that and so on.

Now the Minister of Mines and Energy has mentioned that in October a final decision has to be made. The people of this Province know our decision. Our decision is that the Lower Churchill project must be proceeded with if Newfoundland is to have any future.



That is our policy. There is no secret about that. But we are not going to proceed with it if anything occurs between now and October to show that we cannot for some reason raise the money, or there might be some reason that the project might be done a bit differently, or something arises that shows us it just cannot go ahead. Well if that occurred then in October there would not be the final project release. But it is the government's policy that if everything remains as we know it now, that nothing happens to interfere, and we know where we can raise all the monies required in the next five years, then in October this is going ahead, the final release will be given. That is our policy. The government is committed to do the Lower Churchill, the public of this Province knows that. But we have got to have some sense, and the final date to make the final decision is next October. And when that final decision is made there will be a press conference where there will be the Premier and the Minister of Mines and Energy, who has done such a splendid job in that portfolio in the last two years, and who knows who else will be at the press conference, and they will explain in detail then to the public what the decision is, and what the latest information then is on the project. And between now and October the Minister and the Premier and others will be doing this all over the Province, and in Labrador and throughout the Province briefing the public on the project and what it means and all the rest of it, and this has also been done before.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is all we can really say about the Lower Churchill project. Now there is nothing new to say about that project. The minister has said we expect \$43 million to be spend this calendar year. But if the final project release is given next October that means that you then got to start entering into the major contracts, and you have to start obligating yourself. If you give a major contract out for a generator, or a major contract out for digging the tunnel, for doing the tunnel, you are then getting up into the many millions of dollars. And once you give the contract you are then under a liability to see that it goes ahead, and that payment is

made. That is why we are not just asking for \$50 million. This is one of the questions that the Leader of the Opposition asked, why if we are only going to spend \$43 million on the Lower Churchill this year, the limit should be \$50 million. Now, I think, he knows better than that, but he is trying to alarm the public. He is not that stupid. He is not stupid at all. That is why it makes you wonder when he does such mean and nasty things and says such mean and nasty things. But, of course, mean and nasty is not the same as stupid. He is not stupid. He is mean and nasty.

Fifty million - he knows very well that \$50 million is not enough. If we get the final project release -

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Sit down while I am raising a point of order, please. You do not own the House you know.

MR. CROSBIE: Neither do you.

MR. NEARY: Sit down, you might own half of the Province -

MR. CROSBIE: Make your point.

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

MR. NEARY: - you might own half of the Province but you do not own this House, Sir. A point of order, Sir. The minister, Sir, in his remarks there a few moments ago made some very uncomplimentary statements about the Leader of the Opposition. And I consider these remarks to be unparliamentary, and I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to ask the minister to retract and apologize to the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. EVANS: He is a man.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of being delayed with nonsense with the Member for Bell Island. I will retract anything he likes. He is not mean. He is not nasty. I will retract.

MR. NEARY: Do not be funny.

MR. CROSBIE: I will retract. Now we can get on with the debate.

Now, Mr. Speaker,

MR. NEARY: That is what causes the House -

MR. CROSBIE: - \$43 million will be spent on the project, but after October if the final project release goes ahead then major contracts

have to be let. So the Hydro Authority has to have the ability to borrow more money than \$43 million or \$50 million.

The second point, we do not - sometime in January, if the project goes ahead next Winter there will have to be a bill brought before this House to ask the House to authorize the whole project, and to see that it is completed. Because there has to be a bill authorizing the whole thing as showing that this House will back the completion of the whole project. If we do not have that I doubt very much whether we will be able to raise the tremendous amounts that have to be raised. So sometime in January, February or March it will have to come before this House, if the project proceeds, a bill dealing with the whole project, and asking the House to authorize it and the borrowing for the whole project.

Now apart from the Lower Churchill, Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority has other projects underway on the Island of Newfoundland and in Labrador for which they also have to borrow money. They generally spend \$15 million to \$20 million a year just on the Island of Newfoundland putting in diesel generators here and building the transmission lines in various sections of the Province, from Buchans to Bottom Brook and Bottom Brook to Stephenville and so on and so forth. This work is continually going on.

So the Hydro Authority has to be able to borrow money to carry out its own projects on the Island, so that is another reason why the limit cannot be \$50 million. The \$200 million limit is suggested as being the safest reasonable limit that the government should ask the House to approve so that we are covered for any possible eventuality up to next Winter. But if the Lower Churchill goes ahead, it will not permit the Lower Churchill project to go ahead without us having to come back to the House. That is what the limit is there to insure. If the honourable Leader of the Opposition does not trust the government, and he does not seem to trust the government, well this means that the government has to come back to this House or the Lower Churchill cannot proceed. It cannot proceed on \$150 million or whatever we can borrow under this. This is a self-imposed limit. We did not have to impose this, Mr. Speaker. It has been done voluntarily. We are asking the House to do this voluntarily.

This bill for some reason is supposed to be arrogant, contemptuous and contemptible - all of these adjectives about this bill which sets a limit on what the government can do, something never done in this House before, these kinds of adjectives are used about it. Well, you can easily see what the motive is, Mr. Speaker. The honourable gentleman opposite suggested that at least once a year a bill should be brought before the House so the Lower Churchill project can be debated. There will never be a Lower Churchill project if we have to bring a bill before this House every year, each year of the next five to authorize the Lower Churchill project. Who is going to lend money to develop the Lower Churchill if they know that next year the House of Assembly has to vote again on a new bill and might turn the project down one-third completed or one-half completed or whatever? If the project is to go ahead one bill will have to be passed by this House authorizing the whole project or who will lend the tremendous sums of money to it? There is no need of a bill to be introduced in this House every year

so the project can be debated. The project can be debated on the estimates for the Minister of Mines and Energy. They can be debated on the votes for the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority. It can be debated on the Speech in Reply. It can be debated on the Budget Speech. It can be debated on Private Members' Day if honourable gentlemen opposite put down a motion as we used to do to get a debate upon the Javelin projects and so on, and that was the only way you could ever get a debate on that or the old refinery. There are a dozen different ways this can be debated every year. Or the government can bring in its own resolution saving all members of the House support, or whatever is being done in connection with the Lower Churchill. You do not need a bill introduced every year. So we decide every year in this House whether the project is going to go ahead or not and finish the project off right away because it will never start under such terms and conditions.

So, those are just some of the reasons why that suggestion cannot be adopted. The Leader of the Opposition said that the Minister of Mines and Energy casually announced the \$43 million expenditure in the House, as though this was the first time that had been announced. It was announced in detail at the press conference in connection with the starting of the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority. It was announced in the speech at Rotary and it has been announced two or three times apart from that to the public. It is not new.

MR. BARRY: Everybody in Newfoundland heard about it.

MR. CROSBIE: Everyone in Newfoundland heard it except the Leader of the Opposition who heard it and forgot it or else heard it and does not want to remember it. What kind of picayune criticism is that! Then the Leader of the Opposition says it is \$2 billion now, the cost is, and he first announced that and it is going to be \$2.5 billion and he is up announcing it is going to be \$2.5 billion. But he is all for the project! He is all for the project! He really

supports the project! But he wants to scare everybody off now by saying it is going to go to \$2.5 billion. He announces and he pronounces and he prophesies this great supporter and advocate of the Lower Churchill project, this boaster of the project, this man who supports it so wholeheartedly, then says that he, he, the great calculator, the great estimator, not to mention the great emancipator, that he now prophesys it is going to go \$2.5 billion because he wants to frighten the people of the Province. Then he gets up in the House and says that he supports the project and he badly wants it to go ahead and he wants to see the employment that it is going to give. Like heck he wants to see it! Nothing he would sooner see than the exact opposite and that is the whole point of his remarks.

How can the Leader of the Opposition know it is going to go to \$2.5 billion, and then pretend that we have information that shows that, that he somehow got a copy of. It is going to be no secret what the project costs, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Canada at Ottawa has got to know what it costs. Everyone we approach to lend money to the project is going to know how much it costs. Every financial prospectus the government issues when the government goes to borrow money

will have to have a special section saying what the Lower Churchill project is going to cost. There will be no secret about what it is going to cost. There is no secret now. We have nothing to hide, and we are not attempting to hide anything. There will be a hundred ways you can find out, if we did not tell the House, that the House can find out what it is going to cost in the next twelve months or in the next five years.

The Hon. Leader of the Opposition said there is not a customer in sight to use the power. Here is the booster! Here is the man! Here is the champion of this project! What tripe!

MR. NEARY: Well, where are they?

MR. CROSBIE: The customers are here, 500,000 of them! And the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority and Newfoundland Light and Power and Bowater Power and anyone who consumes power on the Island of Newfoundland. And the customers are in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and a transmission line will take power there. That is customers. And there are customers in Quebec who take the surplus energy for five or six or eight years as long as they are surplus. And there will be many other customers once they know this project is really going ahead who may decide to come to Newfoundland to establish business here. To say that there is not a customer in sight! There is no customers like ERCO in sight. We do not want the ERCO kind of customer. That is the Roberts' type customer. That is the customer of the Roberts-Smallwood government, ERCO. We do not want ERCO customers. No, we have no ERCO customers. There is not an ERCO customer in sight. We do not want to sight them.

MR. THOMS: Who was in the cabinet then? Who was in the cabinet then?

MR. NEARY: On a point of order, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: I would like to call upon Your Honour to rule whether the minister is relevant to bill under debate, Sir, or if he has wandered far afield? And if he has wandered would Your Honour try to restrain the minister, and get him back on the right course again?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Chair will try and restrain the Hon. Minister of Fisheries and remind him of the rule of relevancy.

MR. CROSBIE: I agree with one hundred per cent. I was only responding to a point, a non-point that had been made, but I will try and keep as relevant as I can.

How will government repay the \$200 million? I am responding to the Leader of the Opposition. We do not know if the government will repay the \$200 million. We do not know if \$200 million will be borrowed. Passing this bill does not mean to say \$200 million is going to be borrowed. This bill does not say "Borrow \$200 million!"

MR. F. ROWE: It provides it.

MR. CROSBIE: It provides that the government or the Authority can borrow it, and not borrow any more than that. It does not say we must borrow \$200 million. It is very likely that when we next come back to the House \$200 million will not have been borrowed. So when the honourable gentleman says, "How are we going to pay off the \$200 million?" The answer is we probably will not need to pay off \$200 million. But how will we pay off what is borrowed? We will pay it off the same way that the Power Commission is now paying off the hundreds of millions they borrowed while gentlemen opposite were in power. The rates charged for power, the people pay the Authority for the energy, and then the Authority takes that and it meets the interest, and it meets the principle in the same old way. This is a self-sustaining project. It is not one that is going to have to be subsidized. That is how it will be paid off. The same way as Newfoundland Light and Power pays off when they borrow money to provide service. They pay it off over twenty years or thirty years or forty years. That is how it will be paid off.

Where are we going to get money from, the Leader of the Opposition asks? We are going to get it from the ordinary places. They will go to the bank, and get financing from the bank the same as they do now, from their bankers, the Hydro Authority will, and they will get it from banks. And they will get it from trust companies. And if they have a bond issue they will get it from the various institutions



about the world who loan money by way of bonds. That is where they will get it. (A drink of water will be all right if we had a water boy.) So that is how it is going to be repaid, and that is where it is going to be borrowed.

The Hon. Leader of the Opposition illustrates a **fateful** defect of his own character when he suggests this, this is his suggestion: That the Government of Newfoundland, this government, will try to get us so deeply into the Lower Churchill, this Province is committed, all for political reasons. Now this surely must illustrate, Mr. Speaker, you know, the principles on which the last government operated, of which he was a member, for him to say that. **Would you** think that a group of seventeen people, members of this House, would engage in a diabolical plot to plunge the Province into the Lower Churchill project if it is not feasible all for political reasons, all

to get some construction and a \$2 billion obligation, well that really boggles the mind! If we were the type to do that, we would not try to do it through the Lower Churchill project. We would borrow \$200 million or \$300 million and spend it on roads and water and sewerage and recreation and other little projects like honourable gentlemen opposite attempted to do in 1971 but got defeated anyway. We would not for political reasons just try to proceed with the Lower Churchill. And it is beneath, it should be beneath the office of the Leader of the Opposition to make such suggestions.

We are committed to the Lower Churchill because all our advice is, and our conviction is, that it is the only possible alternative for the Island if we are going to have the energy we need in the future, and the best alternative. That is supported by a dozen engineering studies and feasibility studies.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. CROSBIE: The honourable Leader of the Opposition referred to the Minister of Finance and attempted to, again to slander the Minister of Finance and his son who is with a law firm downtown.

MR. THOMS: What firm?

MR. CROSBIE: The law firm is Wells, Green, Halley and -

MR. PECKFORD: O'Dea and Earle.

MR. CROSBIE: O'Dea and Earle.

About a month ago, Mr. Speaker, there was a bond issue in Europe. The gentleman who is now the Minister of Finance -

MR. NEARY: To a point of order, I would -

MR. CROSBIE: Oh, we do not want that answered, no!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Would you tell him, Sir, I am raising a point of order.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, I know your point.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I have reason to think the remarks being made by the honourable minister are completely irrelevant to the bill under debate and I ask Your Honour to enforce the rule of relevancy as far as the minister is concerned, Sir. If he persists on wandering away from this bill, not being relevant, that Your Honour invoke the Standing Rules and ask the minister to take his seat or name him, Mr. Speaker, put him out

of the House.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to that point of order. Yes, this is irrelevant to this bill. But the Leader of the Opposition was allowed to imply that there had been some impropriety or illegality in a situation where the Minister of Finance's son was involved in the law firm that acted in connection with a bond issue of the Province. He was allowed to make that inference. Then he dropped it after you ruled it was irrelevant. But he has made that inference now and it should be answered publicly and that is why I am trying to answer it. I agree it is irrelevant to this bill.

But, can a member of this House make a canard like that, a false and malicious, slanderous statement like that and then agree it is irrelevant and no one is allowed to answer it? That is the point, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The point of order - I suppose it was irrelevant for the honourable Leader of the Opposition to refer to that particular item. Then it is as the honourable minister has already said, just as irrelevant for the honourable minister to speak to that point.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I will have to agree with your rulings which are wise and sagacious. I have said that it is false and slanderous, so I will leave it at that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what other points were made. There was not much else made. Oh yes, there was a statement that the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority was out of control.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. The minister, Sir, when he rose in his place just now when he was speaking on the point of order referred to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition as being false and slanderous. Now, I ask Your Honour to rule on that. Is that parliamentary, Your Honour? If it is not parliamentary, would Your Honour ask the minister to withdraw these remarks and apologize to the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The honourable Member for Bell Island rose on a second point of order in that short time. As far as the Chair is concerned, the point of order should be raised when it is made. It cannot be raised a while later. The honourable Member for Bell Island should have raised the point in his

previous point of order.

MR. NEARY: But, Mr. Speaker, I could not raise it because the point of order, Sir - because the minister just made the statement when Your Honour sat down. When Your Honour made his ruling, the minister then referred to remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition as being false and slanderous, as Your Honour sat down. So, I could not raise the point of order up to this moment.

MR. WINSOR: It was not said before.

MR. NEARY: It was not said before, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Chair has made a ruling.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, this harassment - if the honourable gentleman wants to harass like this, let him go ahead.

MR. WINSOR: What harassment?

MR. CROSBIE: Harassment! That the Hydro Authority was out of control! Well, the Hydro Authority reports to the Minister of Mines and Energy who reports to the cabinet. It is the same arrangement exactly as went on from 1949 to 1972. The Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission reported to a minister, it happened to be Premier Smallwood, who reported to the government and the House, or was supposed to. But now this Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Authority is supposed to be out of control for some reason when exactly the same system is in effect. The Treasury Board has to approve. Their estimates have to come to the government. Their budget has to come to the government. And it is supposed to be out of control!

Well, I do not know how this can be taken seriously, Sir. Obviously, it cannot be taken seriously. I was amused to see the Leader of the Opposition say, and I quote, "Our credit is strictly limited. You must be careful how we use it." I agree absolutely. This is the one thing he said in his, the honourable gentleman said in his speech that I agree with. And how often we have said it over here! Only today in Question Period we heard the Opposition critic on education get up and suggest that all school board debts in the Province should be taken over by the government, and the government should do this and the government should spend that. Now we heard the Leader of the Opposition say in another context, when he wants to attack and criticize the government, that "Our credit is strictly limited. We must be careful how we use it." That is exactly right. And when the Opposition are making their horrendous suggestions for what should be spent and borrowed and so on, and we should take over all the school debts and we should take over this and we should abolish that, let us just remember the Leader of the Opposition's words. They should be inscribed in tablets and a tablet given to each member of the Opposition so that they will not forget it: "Our credit is strictly limited. We must be careful how we use it. Edward R. Roberts, Esquire." I agreed with that.

MR. MURPHY: Edward M.

MR. CROSBIE: Edward M., is it? M for Moxon. So, Mr. Speaker, we agree. Our credit is limited. But we say that one of the things that should have priority in this Province is spending to develop the Province. It is spending that is going to give the Province some kind of a future. That is the kind of spending that should have priority. That is the kind of borrowing, that is the kind of borrowing that should have priority and borrowing for the purposes of developing the Lower Churchill, borrowing for purposes of developing hydro and steam power and turbine, gas turbines and so on on the Island of Newfoundland and diesel generators and the same in Labrador that

has got to have priority. That has to come ahead of a lot of - that is at the head of the priority list.

So, if our credit is strictly limited, and if we have got to be careful how we use it, that is all true. But the first priority has got to go to things that are going to develop the Province so that in the future we will be able to afford the education facilities and the hospitals and the roads and the social assistance and the rest of it. That is where the priorities have to go.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. NEARY: Severance pay for cabinet flunkies!

MR. CROSBIE: I wish someone would give the honourable gentleman some severance pay, and they will. The electorate in Harbour Main - Bell Island will give the honourable gentleman his graduation present when the election comes, and his severance pay too.

MR. NEARY: Maybe they will put me on full salary -

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

MR. NEARY: - and boet you crowd out -

MR. CROSBIE: So, Mr. Speaker, in concluding, in concluding -

MR. NEARY: - as you deserve.

MR. CROSBIE: Listen to the rapacity, to the jocosity and the raucosity of the honourable gentlemen opposite snarling and snapping and snipping and snirking and I would not say what else you are doing there. They should be out fighting forest fires or doing something useful. They would be more useful at that than being in this House trying to obstruct the business of the House and trying to twist the meaning of this. Look, the bill -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, the bill is one page and one-quarter of a page, the simplest bill we have had before the House, not -

MR. THOMS: A \$200 million bill is not minor!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: Listen to the little fellow! Listen to him!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Jack rabbit.

MR. NEARY: Sit down when the Speaker calls order.

MR. SPEAKER: The Speaker has to call order for several reasons, mostly because honourable gentlemen to my right seem to insist on interrupting when they have no right to. And if they insist and persist in doing that, then the Chair will certainly name them.

MR. CROSBIE: I am just concluding. Now, the honourable gentlemen over there did not listen to a thing I said. He said here was a bill, that a bill to spend \$200 million is not a minor bill. He has not heard a word I said. What can I do to get through to the honourable the Member from Bonavista North. The bill does not authorize us to spend one red cent. It puts a ceiling on what we can borrow. It does not authorize us even to borrow money. We have that authority now. We can borrow \$200 million. We can borrow \$500 million. We can borrow \$8 billion. We can borrow \$2 billion, \$5 billion, \$10 billion for the Hydro Authority now. We have the authority now. We can guarantee the same amount. We can guarantee \$5 billion or \$10 billion but this bill is going to stop us. It is going to prevent this rapacious and crazy government from going out and borrowing \$1 billion, \$2 billion, \$3 billion, \$500 million, \$201 million. It is going to stop us from borrowing anything but \$200 million, if we need to borrow that, and then we got to come back to the House. It is to insure that we have got to come back to the House next Winter and put a bill before the House, if the project release comes in October, and put a bill before the House dealing with the whole Lower Churchill project, dealing with that and asking

members most likely to approve a completion guarantee for the Lower Churchill. That is when the real debate can take place, and that is when we will see whether the Opposition are for or against the Lower Churchill.

And this bill here **should only take about ten minutes for** the House to pass. There is no reason why all of this debate should go on except the Leader of the Opposition could not be allowed to stand unreplied to. That is why we are asking the House now to do what everybody has said they want done, limit what the Hydro Authority can borrow, and limit what we can guarantee.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to speak in this debate but I am afraid, Sir, that the Minister of Fisheries has provoked me to the extent that I now have to make a small contribution to this debate.

Sir, watching the Minister of Fisheries in action and listening to what the minister had to say I could only come to the conclusion that the government, the administration, is completely on the defensive when it comes to this project, this development of the Lower Churchill. The Minister of Fisheries is not usually that sensitive, Sir. The Minister of Fisheries is usually the aggressor, is usually a member who goes on the attack, who takes the initiative. But this afternoon, Sir, he spent the last half hour or so trying to defend a rather peculiar and mysterious policy and course that the administration is on in connection with the development of the Lower Churchill. The minister was completely on the defensive.

The minister, Sir, during his whole debate kept using the word 'if', 'if' kept popping up practically everywhere in the minister's remarks, every paragraph, every word that he uttered practically began with 'if'. If this happens, if that happens, if we go ahead with the Lower Churchill in October, if, if, if. The whole thing was iffy right from start to finish. But if the minister did nothing



else this afternoon, Sir, he confirmed something that I had been thinking for a long time, and certainly something that the people of Newfoundland have been thinking for a long time and have been concerned about, and that is, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that the Premier and some of his colleagues in the government **have been trying** to leave the impression for the last few months that the development of the Lower Churchill was now underway was not true. The final decision has not yet been taken. And I have been saying that for months. The final decision to develop the Lower Churchill has not yet been taken. All the government is going to do, Sir, this year is spend \$42 or \$43 or \$44 million on some preliminary work on the Lower Churchill, and that is a far cry, Sir, from the impression that **has gone forward**, and the impression that the administration has tried to leave with the people of this Province.

MR. BARRY: Are you disagreeing with your leader?

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. - what do you mean am I disagreeing with my leader?

MR. BARRY: He says we are going **too fast**, you say we are going **too slow**.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, what I am saying is that this is a snow job, this is election bait.

MR. BARRY: Come off it!

MR. NEARY: Yes, I can come off it - come off it, how are you!

MR. BARRY: We do not need it. We do not need it.

MR. NEARY: Sir, let it be reported to the people of this Province that the final decision to go ahead with the hydro development on Gull Island and the Lower Churchill has not yet been made and will not be made until some time this Fall. And we were told, Sir, when the estimates went through this House by the Minister of Mines and Energy that some \$23 or \$24 million was going to be spent this year on work on the Lower Churchill. Now it is up to

MR. NEARY: \$42 million or \$43 million or \$44 million, and not one ounce of information on what that money is going to be spent on. And Mr. Speaker, the trouble, the aggravating part of the whole thing is this, that unemployed people in this Province are calling up their members, are calling up Canada Manpower, are calling up anybody they think has any authority looking for a job on the Lower Churchill and in the last week or so, Sir, I have called Canada Manpower here in St. John's, I have called Canada Manpower in Goose Bay and they know nothing to this moment of any large numbers of men being hired for work on the Lower Churchill this year.

I am told by the Canada Manpower people, Sir, that the only orders they have for employees, for workers this year on the Lower Churchill, are technicians, engineers and inspectors. And yet, Sir, the minister, the Premier and the Administration, is leaving the impression and not correcting it, they are letting it stand on the record, that there is going to be 700 or 800 or 1,000 jobs on the Lower Churchill this summer. There will be a handful of engineers, technicians and inspectors, that is what we are told by the Canada Manpower people. And I think, Sir, it is cruel and it is time that this administration set the record straight - on our people who are unemployed are not going to find work on the Lower Churchill this summer.

Out of this \$200 million, maximum that they can borrow, they are going to borrow \$42 million or \$43 million or \$44 million to do some preliminary work, to do some drilling, to lay out the site, to determine where the campsite is going to be and then leaving the impression that - I think I heard the Minister of Fisheries, I believe it was, I am not quite sure what minister it was, but he said, "We are going full speed ahead on the Lower Churchill. And then this afternoon the Minister of Fisheries let the cat out of the bag and said the decision will not be taken until some time this Fall. That is the truth of the matter and that is what the people of this Province should be told: There will be no jobs.

MR. BARRY: Not so!

MR. NEARY: That is true, Sir. Well call Canada Manpower. Go out now while I am on my feet speaking and call up Canada Manpower.

MR. BARRY: People are being hired now.

MR. NEARY: Who is doing the hiring? Who is doing the hiring for the Lower Churchill?

MR. BARRY: Canada Manpower and Newfoundland Hydro people directly.

MR. NEARY: Are hiring directly? Sir, the only orders, and I want to repeat this and the minister can go out and pick up his phone now and call Canada Manpower, the only orders they have are for a handful of engineers, technicians, inspectors and the like. That is all they have. But, Sir, that is - you know, what am I, trying to mislead the House? I am? Well I am only repeating what Canada Manpower told me.

MR. BARRY: What are you talking about?

MR. NEARY: Canada Manpower both here in St. John's and in Coose Bay. I have called them up three or four times because people are calling me from all over the Province looking for employment. I am sure they are calling the minister.

MR. BARRY: When did you last call them?

MR. NEARY: I called them about - what is today, Tuesday? -I called them Thursday or Friday of last week, Thursday or Friday of last week I called and that is what I was told. They are completely frustrated because the minister, the Premier, the Minister of Fisheries are making statements, false statements, I do not know if they are deliberately trying to -

MR. BARRY: Bunkum.

MR. NEARY: - mislead the people. I do not think they are, Sir. But they are misleading the people into believing that everybody is going to get a job on the Lower Churchill this year when the final decision to go ahead with that project will not be taken until sometime this fall. And then it depends on a lot of factors, a lot of factors. It may not go ahead at all. The administration will probably hope that the election will be over by that time. And that is why they are trying to leave the impression now.

MR. BARRY: What are we going to do, turn out the lights then, are we?

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MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. BARRY: Turn out the lights then?

MR. NEARY: What the administration is doing, Sir, they have got the hen on the nest, Sir, the broody hen on the nest and they did not put any eggs under her. Now how do they expect her to hatch out the chicks if you do not put eggs under the hen?

The Leader of the Opposition told us they have no customers. And then there was another disclosure made during his erratic speech, made by the Minister of Fisheries, another disclosure, Sir.

And I hope that the -

MR. BARRY: What did he do, freak out?

MR. NEARY: No, he did not freak out. But I would have sworn, Sir, that if the liquor store employees were not on strike -

MR. BARRY: Oh now, now, now.

MR. PECKFORD: Now boy, but it out! How about a little drop of wine?

MR. NEARY: If they were not on strike, Sir, I would say that the Minister of Fisheries might have gotten a little bit carried away today. But I know that cannot be true, Sir, because the liquor stores are all closed.

MR. SIMMONS: He has his private stock here.

MR. NEARY: Well, maybe he gets his private - maybe the Churchill Falls plane brings it in from Montreal.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, there was another disclosure. There was another disclosure made, Sir, a very, very important disclosure as far as I am concerned. The minister said the customers would be the people of Newfoundland. Well, Sir, if that is all we need the power for, why do we not just recall the power from the Upper - the 300 horsepower, I think it is, - is it 300 horsepower? 300,000 horsepower? - we have from the Upper Churchill? Why not recall the 300,000 or so horsepower from the Upper Churchill? That would be -

MR. BARRY: 400,000 horsepower.

MR. NEARY: All right, 400,000 horsepower. That would be quite sufficient to take care of the needs of the householders in this Province.

MR. BARRY: For how long?

MR. NEARY: For how long? Indefinitely. The householders I am talking about. It could take care of Newfoundland indefinitely.

And then the Minister of Fisheries said -

MR. YOUNG: Will you sit down!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I want the Member for Harbour Grace, Sir, if he is going to mumble, to go back to his seat.

MR. COLLINS: I am going to --

MR. NEARY: Muttering --

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Why does he not get up and make a speech? What did his constituents send him here for?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: I can hardly hear myself speaking.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable the Member for Bell Island is correct. He does have the right to be heard in silence. The Honourable the Member for Harbour Grace does not have the right to mumble in the seat he is in now or in the other seat, his own seat, unless he has the right to speak.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the disclosure that was made by the honourable the Minister of Fisheries was this: He told us that the customers, first of all, would be householders in Newfoundland. "And then any surplus" he said, "would be used by customers in the Province of Quebec." Now, Sir, let us just think back a couple of years. Let us just think back a few months, a few weeks ago. The Premier goes around this Province making foolish statements about the former administration selling the Newfoundland power to our sister Province of Quebec, and that our hydro power that should be used in Newfoundland is being used in Quebec. Have they now had a change of heart, a change of policy? Is the Minister of Fisheries laying down a new policy contradicting the Premier? Making a liar out of the Premier? That Quebec is going to be the biggest customer that the Newfoundland Hydro Development Corporation will have for its power?

When he is talking about a surplus being sold to Quebec, what does he mean? How much of a surplus? Will it be ninety per cent of the power generated on the Lower Churchill? Is Quebec going to be our biggest customer as it was for the Upper Churchill? I

would say, Sir, and I will not be too far wrong, that if the development of the Lower Churchill goes ahead at all this year it will only go ahead because the power will be sold to the Province of Quebec.

This is certainly, Sir, a complete reversal of what the Premier has been saying both inside and out side this House for the last two or three years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister also made reference to the fact that this was nothing new, unlimited borrowing was nothing new, that the former administration did it, Newfoundland Power Commission had the authority to borrow unlimited

amounts of money. The Minister of Fisheries referred to the Premier and the former administration. Well, one thing I will say for Premier Smallwood, Sir, and the minister knows this to be true, that when he did ask the House for financing for a project, when he did bring a bill into this House asking the House to authorize borrowing, whether it was for Come By Chance or the linerboard mill or the Upper Churchill, the Premier certainly gave the House the details on what the money was going to be used for. That is what we are lacking in this debate here today, Sir. We have no details, none.

Mr. Smallwood would come in here day in and day out with a bill, for instance, the bill to build the oil refinery at Come By Chance. He even went as far, Sir, as to allow himself to be drawn into, conned into bringing in Mr. Shaheen and his officials, bringing them in on the floor of the House.

MR. MOORES: That was a mistake.

MR. NEARY: It was not a mistake. The Minister of Fisheries then over here in the Liberal Reform Party was able to cross-examine these gentlemen as if he was down in a court somewhere.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: He took the Fifth Amendment!

MR. CROSBIE: You did not like that, did you?

MR. NEARY: No. Now they are kissing cousins.

MR. CROSBIE: Well, hardly.

MR. NEARY: Well, the minister gets invited on the Queen E II and all over the place. But, Sir, that is the extent to which the former administration went to make sure that the House had all the facts and had all the information. But we are getting nothing about the development of the Lower Churchill, no facts at all, none. All we are getting is a feeling going abroad to somehow or other lead our people to believe that we are going full speed ahead on the development of the Lower Churchill when in actual fact we are not.

So, if nothing else comes out of this debate today, Sir, on this bill, certainly that word will go out, that a final decision has not yet been taken to develop the Lower Churchill and it may or may not be taken this year. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to make one thing abundantly clear, that the Liberal Party of this Province that developed the Upper Churchill and that made the development of the Lower Churchill possible has been committed to developing that project, Sir, for the last ten or twelve years.



MR. BARRY: Be serious.

MR. NEARY: I am serious. Mr. Smallwood committed the Liberal Party to developing the Lower Churchill, and but for the rivers and streams that were diverted on the Upper Churchill, it would not be feasible to develop the Lower Churchill at all.

MR. BARRY: I guess he will have to come back for this one.

MR. NEARY: Maybe he will have to come back. Maybe it might take a Mr. Smallwood to develop the Lower Churchill. It would certainly take men of courage. It would take, Sir, it would take more than just a leader of a government and a group of ministers that work from about eleven o'clock in the morning until about three in the afternoon and then go home. And then get bushed after a couple of weeks and take off to exotic parts of the world. It is going to take more than that to get the Lower Churchill developed.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, it sure will.

MR. NEARY: It is going to take more than that, Sir, to get Newfoundland back on the rails on industrial development.

MR. CROSBIE: Another attack like that and the government is gone. There is only one word for that situation.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it will take a man of courage and imagination and initiative who is prepared to work night and day -

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: - not a rich little man who is only prepared to punch in two or three hours a day. It will take much more than that.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: I am talking about, Sir, the -

MR. BARRY: Where is he? Has he gone?

MR. NEARY: I am talking about the leader of an administration that develops -

MR. BARRY: Gone already!

MR. NEARY: - that develops the Lower Churchill and develops this Province.

MR. COLLINS: Real quitters!

MR. NEARY: It will not take a quitter, Sir. It will take -

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: It will take -

MR. DOODY: Tell Mr. Smallwood.

MR. NEARY: It will take more than just a crowd of rich men, Sir,  
who only believe in jetting around the world -

MR. BRETT: Clearwater.

MR. NEARY: - and working part-time, part-time ministers.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: It will take more than that to develop the Lower Churchill.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The honourable Member for Bell Island may have gotten carried away, I suppose, in his debate. But, the principle of this bill to me seems to be pretty far ~~away~~ right now.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it will take more than what we see before us in this honourable House today to establish sufficient credibility to put this kind of legislation through the House to authorize this honourable crowd, Sir, to borrow up to \$200 million. If they would only tell us what they are going to use the money for! The minister says, oh that does not mean we are going to borrow it.<sup>n</sup> That does not mean, he says, we have authorization to borrow it.

MR. NEARY: Sir, that is not so. This bill will give the government authorization to borrow -

MR. BARRY: Do not be so foolish.

MR. NEARY: That is not foolish, Sir.

MR. CROSBIE: We had it before.

MR. NEARY: Had what before?

MR. CROSBIE: Authorization to borrow, and now we are cutting it down.

MR. NEARY: They had the authorization before, Sir, to borrow unlimited amounts of money. Now because of the severe criticism of the Opposition, because of the positive suggestions, the constructive criticism made by the Leader of the Opposition who moved an amendment when the original bill was going through the House that the amount be restricted to \$200 million, the administration have had pangs of conscience, second thoughts and have now come to their senses and agreed with the Leader of the Opposition that it should be restricted to \$200 million. Well I am not even happy with that, although I have to go along with it because my leader made that suggestion and moved that amendment. I personally think that it should be restricted to \$5 million. I do not think we should give this part-time honourable crowd of rich little men the authority at all to borrow \$200 million on behalf of the taxpayers of this Province. They do not deserve that authority, Sir. They have not proved that they can handle that kind of authority. And they should be made account for every red cent of that \$200 million, and the \$42 or \$43 or \$44 million that are going to be spent on this year on the Lower Churchill. Let the minister when he is concluding this debate, let him tell us what work is going to be done on the Lower Churchill this year. Give us some details, lay it out in front of us, tell us when tenders are going to be called, and what tenders are going to be called for, and how many men are going to be employed on this job and that job and the other job. Will they be technicians? How many ordinary Newfoundlanders will get employment on the Lower Churchill this year? Lay it all out in front

of us.

MR. BARRY: Tell you all.

MR. NEARY: Tell us all.

Well, Sir, if the minister tells us all this evening that will be the first time, We have had to drag it out of him. And we would almost have to beat him over the head to -

MR. BARRY: It is all here.

MR. NEARY: It is all there. Well **maybe** we will get it now. We will only get it as a result of our persistence, of our keeping the pressure on the administration. But do not try and fool the people, level with them. And if only fifty or one hundred or one hundred and fifty ordinary Newfoundlanders are going to get jobs down there, say so. Do not have our people wasting their time calling up their members, and calling up the Unemployment Insurance Commission, and calling up Manpower and calling up this one, and calling up that one, can you get me a job on the Lower Churchill? And when you go to check you find out that their are no jobs to be had. And here it is the middle of June! Why the snow will be on the ground down there in October!

This whole matter, Mr. Speaker, and I hesitate to say this, Sir, this whole matter has become a political football, and it should not be. It should be removed from the realm of politics altogether, Sir, It is too important a project to Newfoundland. If the honourable the Premier had to follow his mind a couple of years ago and set up some committees in this honourable House perhaps this matter of the development of the Lower Churchill would have been straightened out long ago. We have seen too much nit-picking, and we have seen too much big financing, wheeling and dealing. The project, and I have said this before, the project should have started at least three years ago. The Minister of Fisheries now brushes it off and says, "Oh well the cost has escalated to a couple of billion dollars, but so has the cost of thermo plants, so is the cost of

all other sources of power have escalated. So, our project on the Lower Churchill, our resource is still competitive."

Mr. Speaker, if we had gone ahead with that project when we should have gone ahead, Sir, we would have been in the driver's seat now. Maybe we can still compete with nuclear power, but, Mr. Speaker, the project is now going to cost the taxpayers of this Province, we are going to add to the Provincial debt \$2 billion, over \$2 billion. It will probably be closer to \$2.5 billion whereas we could have built the projects for about \$1 billion, \$1.2 billion two or three years ago if we had gone ahead when we should have instead of fooling around wheeling and dealing and forcing BRINCO out, kicking out one of the best companies that ever came into Newfoundland, delayed the project, set it back. We do not know yet if the project is going to go ahead this year. We do not know that, Sir. The Minister of Fisheries is so iffy that I have my doubts whether it is going to go ahead or not. It will be a terrible tragedy, an awful disaster for Newfoundland if it does not. This honourable crowd, Sir, should be charged with criminal negligence if that project does not go ahead this year.

MR. DOODY: Do not be nasty.

MR. NEARY: I am not being nasty. I am being quite honest and quite sincere. So, Mr. Speaker, I think I have said enough on this. I will be anxious to hear what the Minister of Mines and Energy has to say on this matter now that he has heard the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and myself. I am sure my colleagues would probably like to say a few words in this debate. I hope when the minister does wind up second reading that he will, for the first time, level with the people of this Province and give them the facts, tell them how much it is going to cost. Give us a, if you like, Sir, I think a term they use in the business world, give us a critical path method, critical path.

MR. THOMS: CPM.

MR. NEARY: He has got the very thing.

MR. THOMS: CPM.

MR. NEARY: Tell us when we will reach the crucial stage when we will - what is it they say when they are putting a rocket up to the moon?

MR. YOUNG: Blast off.

MR. NEARY: No, not blast off. Blast off -

MR. DOODY: Go and no-go.

MR. NEARY: What?

MR. DOODY: Go and no-go.

MR. NEARY: Yes, go and no-go. When do we reach the point of no return? Is it October? Is the Minister of Fisheries correct? Do we have to take a decision in October and if so, commit the people of the Province for a couple of billion dollars? It may be, it may be a good thing, Sir, it may be. We have to see, we have to see the bill. I look forward myself coming into this House in October and debating this matter. I do not think that the government should go ahead with this project without putting it to the people. Let the people decide. It might make a pretty good election issue. It might be - the honourable the Premier now has been trying to manufacture an issue for some time to call an election. He does not feel that personality conflict between he and the Leader of the Opposition would be a good reason for calling an election. But here is a good -

MR. EVANS: What personalities?

MR. NEARY: Here is a good reason.

MR. BRETT: Did he say that with a straight face?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, -

MR. EVANS: That would be no contest!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it would not be fair to the people of Newfoundland if an election was fought strictly on personalities. The honourable the Premier versus the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. EVANS: Totally unfair.

MR. NEARY: No, that would not be a good reason for - you have to have an issue, Sir. You have to have some real issues.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NFARY: Mr. Speaker, you have to have an issue and I could not think of - well, I could think of three or four real good issues, gut issues, the offshore mineral, the offshore mineral rights, the 200 mile limit, attack Ottawa, give it to them, let them have it right between the eyes, and the other thing would be

MR. NEARY: the development of the Lower Churchill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Three big issues and if I were to go to fight an election in this Province today, Sir, these would probably - and unemployment, I think I would parade that one out, and the cost of living, I would try and do something about that - and then I would go to the people and say, look Mr. Voter of Newfoundland and Labrador, we are going to go ahead. We have taken the decision, we are locked in now, there is no way we can get out. We have to take the decision. We have to take the decision in the next month and the election can be over in twenty-one days. We are going to have to take the decision to borrow \$2 billion. We have no customers except Quebec Hydro. We are going to have to sell our power to Quebec Hydro and we are going to get half the cost of the transmission line from Uncle Ottawa, maybe a few other dollars, but we are going to have to increase the provincial debt by some \$2 billion, yes or no, do you want us to proceed or do you not want us to proceed, a simple yes or no? That might be a good issue with which to fight an election.

MR. BARRY: Do you want the lights on or do you want the lights off?

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. BARRY: The question you will have to ask is, do you want the lights on or do you want the lights off?

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, that really will not make any difference because the lights are going to be on anyway. When the lights go on again all over Newfoundland will be the day when the Liberals are put back in power. It will be like the song they used to sing during the war.

MR. F. ROWE: When the lights go on again all over the world.

MR. PECKFORD: - the era between 1000 A.D. and 1500 A.D.?

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon.

MR. PECKFORD: Do you know what they call the era between 1000 A.D. and 1500 A.D.? The Dark Ages.

MR. EVANS: Yes, the Dark Ages.



MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this matter is so important, Sir. We have heard from the Minister of Mines and Energy and we have heard from the Minister of Fisheries. I wonder, Sir, for the sake of laying out the policy correctly and getting the information out to the people of this Province, would the honourable the Premier please participate in this debate? Let us get it right from the horse's mouth, so to speak. I would like to hear, I would love to hear the Premier talking about Newfoundland owning its own resources, My God, he almost convinces me! If he had a guitar strung over his shoulder you would swear it was Dick Nolan.

MR. MOORES: Here we go again!

MR. NEARY: But, Sir, let us get it right from the top man, the number one man. The Premier can make a pretty good speech you know when he wants to, Sir, and I must say I am really impressed sometimes. I feel a little chill go up and down my spine when I hear the Premier out in Gander -

MR. MURPHY: That taught you a lesson!

MR. NEARY: - out in Gander lacing into me. Five times I think I got honourable mention in that speech, five times. But, Sir, his philosophy and his theory, I am fascinated by it, on Newfoundland taking back its, owning its own resources. I am really fascinated by this because -

MR. PECKFORD: Come on, wind it up!

MR. NEARY: You know, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing wrong with that philosophy. That is good and the Premier can get it across. One thing he can do, Sir, on television, he can get his message across. My God, and how!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: And I do not know why he hesitates in this House, Sir, The Premier now, when I sit down, should get up and tell us all about the development of the Lower Churchill. Maybe after he has finished he might be able to persuade me to vote for this bill. I cannot vote for the bill, Sir, unless I have more details on what the money is going to be used for and what course of action the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro

Corporation are going to take in the next few months in connection with the development of the Lower Churchill.

The Premier could do himself now honour, could do himself justice here in this House this afternoon if he would only get up and make a fired out speech, liven her up, heave it out of you, as you can do, and tell us all about this development of the Lower Churchill and maybe you can persuade us all to vote for this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. John's East.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, listening to the honourable Member for Bell Island during the last half hour moved me to think it would be good if we had television here, and perhaps if we had television here without the sound so the people could see the antics and his expressions and the way he gets on. It would be something else. You would mistake him perhaps for Mr. Dressup or a few other such characters as that that appear on the television screen.

Mr. Speaker, in connection with this matter, this particular bill itself, the honourable Minister of Fisheries has indicated that he looks on this bill as one which

limits the power of the government to borrow and that the government has unlimited power to borrow with respect to this project. I myself do not really - I appreciate the fact that legally, according to the legal technicalities, according to the legislation that may be passed before this House that he is perhaps right with respect to that, that government has the unlimited power to borrow. But, notwithstanding this, I do not feel that government does have the unlimited power to borrow and I think that he and I are at one in this and that as far as the government is concerned that whether you regard the government as having unlimited power or you do not regard it as having unlimited power, that the fact of the matter is that this particular government in bringing in this measure has chosen to bring in a bill authorizing only the expenditure of \$200 million. So the net result is the same.

Earlier in the session - I think this is very fundamental, it is very fundamental to our principles of government. It was not fundamental to the way government had been carried on in the past, but it certainly is very fundamental that expenditures of any nature have to come before the legislature. Now, this matter was already gone into and gone into extensively earlier in the session when the hydro bill was brought here and it was indicated that the government's intentions were exactly the same both within and without the cabinet for the supporters of the government and the cabinet itself, that no monies would be borrowed until such time as the authority of the legislature had been obtained. I am glad to see the government carrying out its intention in this.

I am also glad to see that the government is bringing in a bill in this case seeking \$200 million and not really seeking permission to borrow the full amount of the estimated cost for the Lower Churchill as it presently exists. It is bringing in a bill for \$200 million and not bringing in one for say \$2 billion which is indicative, I think, of the, as far as the government is concerned, of its sincerity in consulting the legislature and keeping the people of the Province informed of this development at all stages and not just bringing in

at this time one, if you like, omnibus bill which would not permit the fullest debate over the longest period of time that is necessary.

Now, perhaps there is no interest in this. I feel that the bill, all bills embody a principle or a reason for their existence, of course this particular bill, the intrinsic principle or the intrinsic reason is the borrowing of \$200 million. But, I think it goes farther than that in that it indicates a continuation by this government of its determination to keep the borrowing powers of the public money where public monies are involved in the hands of the legislature where it belongs. When we had the debate earlier in the session with respect to this, it was requested for, certainly for two reasons.

Number one was so that the Opposition as is necessary, be given an opportunity to see the plans of the government with respect to it and make a debate. And, number two, that the public can see whatever plans are put forth with respect to it. Now, with respect to the Opposition, I suppose, the old adage comes, you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink. From the observations that I have had of the debate brought in by or led in by the Leader of the Opposition and continued by the Member for Bell Island it is certainly not the fault of this government that the Opposition seems incapable again of contributing in a constructive manner towards a debate in this House of Assembly towards a project which is certainly gigantic in nature, great in magnitude and it is certainly one of the biggest ventures that any government in our history has ever departed upon.

I remember at the time when we were having the debate here in the House with respect to the hydro legislation earlier in the session that the Leader of the Opposition had said, "Oh, you should bring in your bill, you should bring it in anyway." And the quotation he used, which would be found in Hansard, is to the effect that you can expect the legislation to go through without any extensive debate. I think that this is indicative really of the Opposition's attitude, and they certainly confirmed it today, that they really are not interested in dealing in great depth with the issues involving this great and huge, gigantic project. They are used, unfortunately, and this is what this legislation stops forever and a day, I think, or I would hope it would stop forever and a day - prior to the amendment of the Revenue and Audit Act by this government, prior to the implementation of the policy of this government with respect to borrowing, we had an instance that we all know about, the Melville Pulp and Paper where borrowing could go on in the Cabinet. As a result of borrowing going on and coming close to elections, there were large amounts of money borrowed that the people of Newfoundland will not get back, many millions of dollars as a result of it.

This is why it is so important. It may not - maybe in one day, today there is a good chance it will happen, \$200 million will go through the legislature. Maybe there will not be too much public attention to this particular bill because a lot of information has already, I suppose, been given out by the government when it announces original intention to develop the Lower Churchill and to take over CFLCo. But notwithstanding this, I think this is a safeguard against the happening of events that would really ruin a Province or ruin a country in that there is a definite requirement as far as I am concerned, regardless of any legislation to the contrary, there is a definite requirement before one penny of public money is spent and before any large amounts of public money are committed in any way, that there be reference to the legislature so the people can be aware.

The people do not care about it now. They might care about it in the future. Therein lies the safeguard.

So, I do not look on this - it is limiting the power of the government to borrow, I suppose - but I look on this as really an enabling act, giving the government, that is the Cabinet, power to borrow up to \$200 million and to commit it to the development of the Lower Churchill. Now, when we do this, when we consider this bill, I would suggest to you it becomes a very important one. Now I am well aware of the fact that the government has indicated there will be another bill, as obviously there must be, before the project gets into full swing to authorize the full amount of the project itself. At that time, I would imagine, there would be certainly more intensive debate with respect to the feasibility of the project, what it means to the people of Newfoundland, and all matters ancillary to this. But let there be no mistake that when we vote for this bill today, and we enable \$200 million to be spent by the Cabinet, and if the Cabinet or the government decides to spend this \$200 million as it very likely will be, that we are then committed to the entire project itself because I do not think that this Province can afford to write off large amounts of money.

So to a certain extent, then, this is a preliminary bill as it were but it certainly is most definitely a bill which is going to trigger, if it is implemented and is likely to be implemented, large, gigantic sums of money and as a result of this merits and deserves, I think, full and complete debate. I think this Province in its time has met debates of this nature before. For instance, when the railway went through many years ago, there we had the commitment of a large amount of public money. In that particular case, the expectations were not realized immediately and the country was driven on the brink of bankruptcy as it were but the nature of the benefit received was long lasting.

Similarly we have had other debates in this House going back in history, away from immediate history so we can get away perhaps

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from a bit of partisanship, with respect to the development on the Humber which was very, very successful. But we must remember when we are talking about the beneficial effects, and there are many beneficial effects of this project, and we must bear in mind that while there are going to be many immediate jobs available, many immediate construction jobs and certainly the poliby

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to utilize our natural resources in this Province is one which this government can be proud of, that is another good and beneficial effect. There are also good and beneficial effects of the supply of industry that will allow us to probably industrialize more than we have now, and certainly there are many others that we can think of.

But there are also other and very sobering effects that must be thought of when we are voting this money. And I know full well and have confidence that the government has given full consideration to these particular concerns. That is why I have great confidence and great pleasure in supporting this bill itself, and supporting the vote of the \$200 million.

However when you come down - but there are certain questions that I do feel that the minister will want to address himself to. Now I bring up these questions, they are not new questions, and they are obviously things that this government has discussed from time to time in the past, because it has been quite free with the information its given. The Minister of Mines and Energy has been quite free to give the fullest information as he should give, to the general public and the various public pronouncements he has made. He has not played the game that the members of the opposite side played when they were over here where they thought that what I called Liberal philosophy at the giving of any such information is, any indepth information was playing into the hands of the Opposition, because this government makes its plans and it feels it can stand on its plans and it has assessed all of the alternatives.

One of the things that I would like - there are just a few things I would mention that I would like the minister, if he would, and perhaps he might like to touch upon when he closes the debate, and how deeply he goes into it, of course, is his own concern, But I do think they merit mention here in this Assembly. And the first thing is I would like the minister to give us his comments on how firm the costs presently are now for the project. Now I know



that we have to expect inflation, and I know with respect to a large amount of the money that - with such a large amount of money you cannot peg it to the dollar or even probably the millions of dollars. But I am just wondering if the minister might like to comment on at the present stage taking into account, making allowances for inflation, and inflation being the costs of material, costs of labour, interest costs and what have you, how firm now is this particular estimate that we now have.

And I would also like the minister when he gets up if he would care to address himself to the environmental implications of this particular project throughout the Island and throughout the Mainland of Labrador, because obviously you cannot have a project as gigantic as this particular project without there being certain environmental implications involved. And if he cares to at this time I would very much appreciate if he could define the areas of concern, and what steps the government are taking with respect to them.

Another element that I should like to bring to his attention - not bringing it to his attention, because everyone knows it - in the Teshmont Feasibility Study there is, Mr. Speaker, reference to a transit tunnel between the Island of Newfoundland and the Mainland part of the Province. And I think the words used, the report was not commissioned for this particular purpose, it is almost an aside, it mentioned, and I quote the words used, in order of magnitude which is a ball park figure, I assume, a way-out figure, at that particular time they put in an amount of \$25 million, I believe, I am subject to correction. Now if this is so, and if subsequent studies have proven to the contrary that it cost too much, that it is not feasible, it would appear that this is a relatively small amount of money in relation to the entire cost of the project itself, and it is certainly one which ought to be considered, and I know has been considered. And I am just wondering if a minister might care to pass a few comments with respect to this.

Another item of concern that I should like for the minister to touch upon is - and we have already, the Minister of Fisheries has already

indicated this in his address today - and I am sorry that unfortunately I was not here this morning, I did not know the House was meeting actually. Through my own fault I left before adjournment yesterday - I did not hear the Minister of Mines when he introduced the bill, but the Minister of Fisheries indicated I think that, well I know that we have the market here in the Province with respect to the power and we have the market from the consumers themselves. Now in the feasibility report there are references made to certain triggering industries, I think these are the words that are used, and it may well be that these industries are not necessary, but I would like without going in, I do not think it is necessary into this debate, a full dissertation on a debate on industrial development and a debate on these particular industries, but there is one thing that I would like the minister to address himself to, if he could, and make it quite plain, and that is about the markets and whether or not the markets are here for the electricity itself and if the markets are not here, what is to become of the surplus.

I am thinking particularly, and my own particular concern in this, Mr. Speaker, is this, that there is reference in this feasibility study to certain industries and if the project itself depends upon these industries, it has to be a matter of concern to the people, I think, of this Province because I should not myself like to see inadvertently triggered in order to survive, shall we say and I am not making this as a definitive statement, I am doing it by way of musing to ask the minister if he would like to reply to it, that I should not like to see us have to develop intensively the industries and embark on a type of economic development purely and simply for the purpose of meeting the costs of this project and get ourselves, get this Province again in the position that the previous administration had when it adopted the policy of develop or perish. I think this government has taken the right attitude. As in all things there is moderation between the philosophy, if you like, of Rural Development on the one hand and Industrial Development on the other, or Economic Development on the other. And as in all phases of life moderation is the mediating factor. And I should not like to see

us get, and I do not think we will get into that position but I would like the minister, if he could, perhaps, to comment upon it.

A couple of other items that I would draw to the minister's attention, perhaps he might care to consider them, first of all is the cost of the power here in the Province. I know this is hard to determine but I do remember the chief executive officer, Mr. Groom, indicating on television one time that it does not matter what the cost is, it is still going to be competitive. I did not unfortunately have the opportunity to go into the reason behind his statement at the time, perhaps he gave it, but I would comment with respect to that if we could.

Now in connection with this bill, as I say, this I regard as enabling legislation, and there is going to be another bill and a much more wide far-flung debate to come. I suppose, in the Fall or in January with respect to it. This is a very beneficial project. It is a project that has been undertaken by a government that I think that we can have, I know that we can have full confidence in. I would be very alarmed if the people on the other side of the House were forming the government, because these are the same people who have really pumped into the economic veins, pumped the wealth and the inheritance of generations yet to come into the economic veins of Quebec and into Ontario by the colossal error and blunder that was made with respect to the Upper Churchill. And I know this government will not do it and, as I say, I have full confidence in this government and the government's determination to have feasibility studies done by experts before taking steps, and the honourable Member for Bell Island made a great fetish at the statements he noted with respect to statements made by

MR. MARSHALL: the Minister of Fisheries that he was using the word "if" from time to time. I did not notice that the word "if" was used as much as the Member for Bell Island indicated, but the fact of the matter is it certainly gives a person a great deal more confidence to know that a government is prepared to look at its feasibility reports, and consult its experts before it takes these steps.

Because this is a type of a project which is really, I think, not only is it gigantic and the largest project undertaken by this Province in its history - or this country, really, in its history, the country being Newfoundland and Labrador, - but also it is one which, I do not think, of this magnitude, of this type has taken place, really, anywhere else in the world.

I remember, Mr. Speaker, a speech made by the honourable the Member for Placentia East during this session which I thought was one of the better speeches I have ever heard here in connection with the taking back of the hydro power in the Upper Churchill. I do not know how it occurred, you know, at that particular time. As it presently exists now we have to sell our power to Hydro-Quebec, or we had to develop the Upper Churchill. I do not know what the government has managed or is in the course of negotiating with Quebec at the present time, but I have always felt that this particular line of attack ought to have been challenged at the time by the government of the day. Perhaps it may still be worthwhile for this government to challenge it. Because what we have, Mr. Speaker, really, when we come to talk about the marketing of our electricity, we have a matter of trade and commerce, and under the rules of Confederation commerce is supposed to flow freely from province to province.

And I know you are talking about transmission lines -

MR. NEARY: You cannot even get liquor to flow back from Quebec.

MR. MARSHALL: - I know we are talking about transmission lines going over land, but I think it also must be remembered that we have railways also that go through the lands of our Province and every other province, where the breadbasket of Southern Ontario and

Quebec and these other places are able to market their goods down here, by using our land to support their goods. I do not see, really, any great distinction between that and the hydro lines themselves. I do not know what investigations went on by the previous administration with a view to challenging the position taken by the Quebec Government. But I suspect precious little, because all they cared about at the time was the construction jobs for the purpose of re-election.

But certainly I am not satisfied in my own mind that constitutionally, if you want to put it that way, Quebec really has the right to turn around to us in this Province and say that we cannot transmit our power over Quebec's boundaries or over any other province. As far as I am concerned, we should be able to sell our electricity in the same way, at a reasonable profit, as Alberta is able to prosper because of it. But of course that is something that is in the past. Now we have a project which is gigantic in nature, a large amount of money involved. As I say, I have no hesitation in supporting the government's plans in this area but I think that these particular concerns - I would like to hear from the minister with respect to these particular concerns, as we are voting here on a bill that is going to trigger a possibility of \$200 million into a large industrial complex, a large industrial undertaking, a gigantic undertaking which is going to have to be paid back and is going to involve the credit of ourselves and our children, and, as they say, our children's children for generations to come. And that being so, I would think that we, you know, that we should have a preliminary full explanation from the government with respect to the matters that are of concern to members of this House and look forward in January to a more intensive investigation, if you want to call it, or examination of the plans of the government.

Maybe at that time the government would consider, because of the gigantic nature of the project, possibly they might want to consider getting in the various top experts and officials for the House of Assembly to examine.

MR. NEARY: In October?

MR. MARSHALL: But in any event - I do not know if it is going to be October or whether it is going to be January -

MR. NEARY: Before the election, anyway.

MR. MARSHALL: We can have a debate on it right now. I think one thing though, Mr. Speaker, before sitting down, that I think we should underscore, the honourable the Member for Bell Island indicated that the Premier needed an issue to go to the country. I think the issue that

he could well go to the country with is the honourable gentlemen opposite because the way they have dealt with this important bit of information is indicative that this Province sorely needs a constructive and intelligent Opposition.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: The trained seals.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): The honourable Member for St. Barbe North.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I will not be spending too much time on this particular bill, Sir. And I will try to refer to it as closely as possible and not drift away from the main principle of the bill.

MR. NEARY: As did the member who just sat down.

MR. F. ROWE: Sir, yes the honourable member opposite, Sir, was not even aware of the minister's introduction of the bill which indicates the momentum that the minister had when he introduced the bill earlier this afternoon. The honourable the Member for St. John's East could not even remember that the Minister of Mines and Energy had introduced it.

MR. BELTT: He was not here.

MR. F. ROWE: But, Sir, if we look at the bill. I do not know quite frankly -

MR. NEARY: He was down in the Royal Trust Building.

MR. F. ROWE: - what all the fuss is about, Sir -

MR. YOUNG: He was making his living.

MR. F. ROWE: - on both sides of the House with respect to this bill because -

MR. YOUNG: He is entitled to that.

MR. F. ROWE: Yes, I might surprise the honourable the Member from Bell Island for me to say that. Because looking at it from my point of view, Sir, here is what the act says: An Act To Limit The Financial Responsibility Which May Be Incurred By The Province In Respect Of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Without Further Reference to The Legislature. Now, Sir, the reason why I say I do not know what all the fuss is about is because I think this bill is nothing but pure window dressing. It is political propaganda in the sense it is one upmanship on the part of the present administration to try to

give the impression that every cent that is being borrowed by this administration, or that this administration is responsible for, will get a full airing, a full hearing, I am sorry, or airing for that matter, hearing and airing in this House.

Sir, we have an eighteen and a half man cabinet now and it does not take very long for the cabinet to be whipped into shape, and for the cabinet to whip the caucus in shape as far as supporting any borrowings that this government wants to undertake. It can come in here time after time after time. It can come in here ten times during any one session, each time for \$200 million. That is a total of \$2 billion, is it not?

MR. NEARY: Right.

MR. F. ROWE: They can come in ten times, this administration, under this particular bill and find itself responsible for \$200 million ten times, \$2 billion, without divulging one bit of information in this House or to the people of Newfoundland. This is, Sir, why I say I do not know what all the fuss is about because "without further reference to the legislature." Sir, we have had reference to the legislature on many things by this administration but that does not guarantee that all of the information that is necessary to be known will be brought before this House of Assembly or brought before the people of Newfoundland.

This is one of the problems that we have had with this administration. This, Sir, is why we had the fuss on this side of the House today because my colleagues who have spoken, the honourable Leader of the Opposition and the honourable the Member for Bell Island have been frustrated and confused



and disturbed over the fact that we have not gotten the information that we want to know with respect to the Upper Churchill. That brings me to another point, Sir.

MR. NEARY: The Lower Churchill.

MR. ROWE: The Lower Churchill, I am sorry, the Lower Churchill. That brings me to another point, Sir. This has to do with the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, Newfoundland Hydro, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. We focused attention on the Lower Churchill but there is no guarantee at all, Sir, that this has anything to do with the Lower Churchill. There is no guarantee. The Hydro Corporation has more in its jurisdiction than the Lower Churchill on the Upper Churchill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROWE: Now, Mr. Speaker, am I going to be - if the honourable members opposite want to rebut any of the arguments or any of the points that I am making they can do it in their turn.

MR. NEARY: They could borrow it for a nuclear plant.

MR. ROWE: As my colleague mentioned, they could borrow it for a nuclear plant for that matter. But the attention has been focused on the Lower Churchill. Sir, one wonders why all the attention has been paid to the Lloyds River Diversion and this extra generating capacity in the Bay D'Espoir area, and there is some indication when you look at it, at the government's plans, as to whether or not the government are concerned over whether they will ever get the Lower Churchill off the ground at all. Maybe one of the motivating factors behind the emphasis in the Bay D'Espoir development or the extension to it and the Lloyds River Diversion is the fact that the government is concerned that they will not be able to supply enough electricity on the Island portion of the Province anyway and they are concerned whether or not the Lower Churchill will ever get off the ground.

MR. BARRY: Extremely concerned?

MR. ROWE: Extremely concerned about it.

MR. BARRY: What if it does not?

MR. ROWE: If it does not -

MR. BARRY: What are we going to do for energy in 1980?

MR. ROWE: Well, Sir, if it does not, and only history will indicate whether the government made a brilliant move or made a very desperate mistake back there a few years ago, and this was our concern. The government in the name of ownership of natural resources did give BRINCO the royal boot, they did. And they ended up with the responsibility of ownership of an undeveloped natural resource.

MR. NEARY: If they had their time back -

MR. ROWE: And this was our concern, Sir, ownership of

MR. BARRY: You would rather have it developed -

MR. ROWE: - ownership of an undeveloped natural resource, Sir, as I repeated many times in this House of Assembly, Sir, is far different from the ownership -

SOME NON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROWE: - of a developed natural resource. Now, if the government is so socially minded and are on a nationalism kick -

MR. NEARY: If they only had their time back! If they only had their time back!

MR. ROWE: Nationalization kick, I am sorry, a nationalization kick, they might well have thought of letting BRINCO go ahead and get this thing going as successfully as they did on the Upper Churchill, and then if they want to start nationalizing, then would be time to do it. Instead - the minister is going berserk over there, Sir. He even has -

MR. BARRY: How stupid!

MR. ROWE: Sir, the minister -

MR. BARRY: I am sorry "Fred". You do not know what you are talking about.

MR. ROWE: You know, Sir, that is probably because I am talking common sense.

MR. NEARY: If he only has his time back.

MR. ROWE: The kind of feedback you get from the average Newfoundlander,

Sir, the concern we get from the average Newfoundlander -

MR. BARRY: They have gone crazy.

MR. ROWE: And Sir, if common sense is not so common with honourable members opposite, that is not our fault. It is a good idea to get expert advice from high-paid civil servants. But it is also a good idea, Sir, to listen to the average Newfoundlander and it is our responsibility and it is the responsibility of members opposite to reflect and repeat and voice in this House of Assembly the concern of the average Newfoundlander.

So, Sir, I repeat the question, only history - or the statement - only history will tell whether the government made a drastic mistake in taking over ownership of the natural resources in this particular instance or whether it was a brilliant,

educated gamble. And there are indications that the government is in trouble with respect to the development of the Lower Churchill. Costs are escalating. We have not had any indication, unless my memory is failing me, we have not had any indication as to who is going to put money, investment, into the development of the Lower Churchill. The only indication we got at the present time is that we are going to have to borrow money or try to find investors. We have been told before this administration took over that we are on the verge of bankruptcy. We cannot borrow for capital costs and operating costs in schools. Are we therefore going to borrow for the Lower Churchill? It may be a wise investment, but if we are on the verge of bankruptcy, how are we going to borrow? And I have not had any indication, Sir, and we have not had any indication that we would be, there are people in North America or anywhere else in the world who have given any kind of a commitment that they are willing to invest in the development of the Lower Churchill, not to my knowledge and nothing would be happier for my ears than to hear the minister responsible indicate to this House that there are investors in the financial community who are committed or are interested in making an investment in the Lower Churchill Development.

Now, Sir, as I repeated before, or said before, this is window dressing. It is political propaganda. The government can borrow as much money as it wishes or it can accept as much financial responsibility as it wishes, as a result of the actions of the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, and it can be referred to this honourable House, but that does not mean, Sir, that the people of Newfoundland or this House will get the information that it needs. And the honourable Member for St. John's East, Sir, referred to these points. He himself has asked the honourable minister to answer some questions and one of these questions was the feasibility and the desirability of having a transportation tunnel under the Straits of Belle Isle.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I wonder would the honourable member like to adjourn the debate.

MR. ROWE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wish to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Before I accept the motion to adjourn or whatever else the House Leader has in mind, I would just like to inform the honourable Members of the Legislature that tomorrow at noon time we will be presenting his Honour with the Address in Reply as the committee has drawn up, the honourable Member for Port au Port I think, the Member for Bay de Verde and the honourable Member for Bonavista North. It shall be presented to his Honour at noon tomorrow and if any other members would like to come along they are more than welcome.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, before adjourning I would just like to say, to inform honourable members that the Opposition and the government have agreed. or have agreed with the government that tomorrow afternoon we will meet from three to six, so that we will use the afternoon for public business. It will not be Private Members' afternoon and on that basis I therefore move that the Standing Orders of the House do -

MR. DOODY: He wants to go home.

MR. CROSBIE: At its rising the House do adjourn until three o'clock tomorrow afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Dispense with it.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the House do now adjourn until tomorrow, Wednesday, at three o'clock.

I do now leave the Chair until tomorrow, Wednesday, at three o'clock.

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