

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

House of Assembly
For the period:
3:00 - 6:00 p.m.
February 16, 1977

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS:

The hon. Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House today of certain projects sponsored by the Department of Forestry and Agriculture under the Provincial Job Creation Programme. I have listed the regions in brief. I have an attachment here showing in detail all the programmes that we plan to carry out. In the Labrador area we have two projects at Goose Bay involving acquisition of timber needed for facilities associated with our fire control centre at Otter Creek, and the harvesting of cones for future reforestation programmes. In the Western region we have five projects, at Pasadena, Sops Arm, St. George's, Cormack and Roddickton. These projects range from pre-commercial thinning and site preparation for planting to the construction of helicopter pads at our ranger stations for forest fire suppression and other related activities. In the Central region, ten projects, at Glenwood, Bay d'Espoir, Birchy Bay, Botwood, Gambo, Norris Arm and Gander Bay. These projects include site preparation, pulpwood salvage and cleaning of flooded shorelines, in addition, roadside improvements in the area from Jumpers Brook to Grand Falls, Springdale Junction West and the Port Anson road near Robert's Arm. In the Eastern region we have three projects in the Argentia Access Road - Salmonier area, Port Blandford area and the Lethbridge area. These projects cover roadside improvement and forestry thinnings.

The twenty projects in total will provide employment for various periods for 254 people, representing approximately 15,400 man-days, and will cost \$557,000. The projects are all geared to our present operational plan, our present forest improvement policies of the

Mr. Maynard.

government. Most of the work will start on the projects immediately.

I will have enough copies for all the members of the hon. House, listing in detail each of the projects and how many people will be employed on each of them.

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. J. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition on behalf - actually there are seven petitions - on behalf of seven communities in Fortune Bay. These communities are Harbour Mille, Little Harbour East, Little Bay East, Grand Le Pierre, St. Bernard's, Jacques Fontaine and Bay L'Argent. As all the prayers of these petitions are pretty well identical I will read the first one that is listed here.

"We, the undersigned, feel that we are justified in asking for a firm commitment with regards to the completion of upgrading and subsequent paving of the section of road from the Burin Peninsula Highway to Harbour Mille, connecting the communities of Jacques Fontaine, St. Bernard's, Bay L'Argent, Little Bay East, Little Harbour East and Harbour Mille. We feel that there is still some upgrading to be done with regards to widening the road in certain areas, ditching, taking into consideration that school buses are covering the entire length of the highway on a regular basis. We place special emphasis on the need for guardrails in certain dangerous places. This being done, we feel that the next course of action should be to pave the road since the major portion has been upgraded for some time now.

"We firmly believe that your government should seriously consider our petition and make the necessary commitment to carry out the aforementioned suggestions at the very earliest."

In supporting this petition I should like to point out that the recent publicity given this particular area of my district by the Harbour Mille group that we are all very much aware of, applies quite the same to all the rest of them. And I am afraid that if we do not get something done in this area that these people too will be up in arms as the Harbour Mille people were. I have very much pleasure in supporting these petitions, Mr. Speaker, and I ask that they be placed upon the table of the House and referred to the department to which they relate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to support the prayer of the seven petitions presented by the hon. member for Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. J. Winsor), representing 947 of his constituents in the communities of Harbour Mille, Little Harbour East, Little Bay East, Grand Le Pierre, St. Bernard's, Jacques Fontaine and Bay L'Argent.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that a firm commitment was made to the people in these communities by the administration, but for some reason or other unknown to the people in the area, all of the sudden the equipment was withdrawn from the area. Now, Sir, we have another example of an unkept promise by the administration. It is not good enough, Sir, the way that these people have been treated in these communities.

Mr. Speaker, we saw before our very eyes in living colour recently on television the hazard that is being created in the Harbour Mille area because there are no guardrails on the road, especially for the protection of school buses that go over that road every day. It is a safety hazard, Sir, and it is a wonder, and it is only probably due in large measure to the caution exercised by the drivers of these buses, there has not been one of these buses go off the road and a bus load of children either drowned or killed. It is not good enough, Sir, and I call upon the administration now to fulfill that promise that they have made to the people in these seven communities.

So it gives me great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to support the prayer of the petition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further petitions?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

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

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, I have the answer to a question asked by the hon. member for Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) some days ago, I think it was on the Order Paper, regarding the number of locations of strategically located experimental farms as indicated in a campaign speech October, 1971. The answer is: We have set up three experimental farms since 1972. One is a resource centre at Pynn's Brook, which now serves as an educational facility for farmers and staff. It accommodates the Western swine breeding station. Also it accommodates an equipment bank, and is the site for experimental trials and crop production. We also have our regional offices on that site. #57

In 1973 the development of a potato seed farm was started at Glenwood for the purpose of producing certified seed potatoes for Newfoundland farmers, to demonstrate the potato production techniques. And in Victoria, Carbonear a sheep breeding station has been under development since 1974 for the purpose of producing breeding stock and training entrance into sheep production.

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

X MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a question in the absence of the Premier, and the Government House Leader, Perhaps I could address my question either to the President of the Council or to the Minister of Finance, whoever is the senior minister representing the administration in the House at this time. I ask the Minister of Finance, I am not sure whether the Premier is in the Province or not. Well whoever should appropriately answer the questions, Sir. Have the government received any request or representation from the Mayor or the Council of St. John's with respect to assistance to the city in the situation caused by the present lawful strike of the outside workers at the Municipal Council?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister.

DR. T. FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is, no, Sir.

MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: I thank the hon. gentleman. Given the fact that at present the situation is one of, at most, inconvenience, but it may easily become one of serious inconvenience or even great, great problems, can the hon. gentleman tell us whether the government are prepared to respond to such a request from the city?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister.

DR. T. FARRELL: Well, at the moment, Mr. Speaker, I think it is hypothetical, But I would like to say to the hon. Leader of the Opposition that there have been discussions in case of emergencies, and when that time comes I think we will have some plans to assist in whatever way possible. I should add perhaps that this strike is legal, and perhaps my hon. colleague, the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations might like to add something to that.

MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman's colleague, the Minister of Manpower is not in his seat, although he was in the House earlier on. But granted the fact the strike is lawful, as

I said at first, could the minister tell us with whom these discussions were held, or more particularly, ^{were} ~~where~~ they held in recent days?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister.

DR. FARRELL: Oh, yes. Mr. Speaker, these discussions were all internal with the administration.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh they were not - there were no discussions with the Council?

DR. FARRELL: Oh, no not outside, among our own selves.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes.

DR. FARRELL: No, not with the Council, no, with the administration.

MR. ROBERTS: Not with the Cabinet, the Executive Council.

DR. FARRELL: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Terra Nova followed by the hon. gentleman from LaPoile.

MR. T. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, a question for the hon. Minister of Finance. With respect to the teachers' pension, a matter of grave importance now, insomuch as that if this thing is not resolved in a satisfactory manner, pretty quickly we will have a Province-wide teachers' strike. And I am wondering if the minister can inform the House as to why the government are so insistent and so determined to bring about a change in the wording of the teachers' pension? And I am not exactly informed as to what the wording is, but I think it is a matter that the pension may not be altered without consultation with the teachers. I think it read previously, without the consent of teachers, now it is to read, with consultation with teachers. And I am wondering if the minister can inform the House as to why the government are so insistent and so determined in bringing about this change?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, at the risk of being boring and tedious and repetitious I will go through it again for the benefit of the hon. member. Yesterday I explained at some length, I thought, and in some detail to one of the hon. members opposite who asked very much the same question.

The first part of the question, I think was why is government so concerned about the change in the language at this particular point. The answer to that, as was given yesterday and has been given, is the fact that right now we are only asking for one change in the language of the act and that is that we ask for the right-of the collective agreement. We are asking for the right of consultation on the level of benefit that should be paid by the teachers into the fund, we are not asking that the amount of premium that has been paid by the teachers into the fund. I think it is an average now of about 4 per cent, maybe a little less than that.

Right now the teachers have the right of veto on that. They can say "We pay no more or we pay whatever" and that is the way the present agreement reads. We have asked that that be changed to consultation. The need, or our urgency, as was asked yesterday, or why government is so insistent on it, as it is being asked today, has been explained on many occasions and we will try it again. The fact is that it is a pension fund, that the people of the province of Newfoundland, the taxpayers, are ultimately going to be responsible for the payment of the pension from that fund, and we feel that it is only right and proper that the people of the province of Newfoundland should have some say in how that fund is established and what the premiums are paid into it.

The preamble to the question spoke about the imminence of a strike, and the fact that there was a strike on the way and so on. I think that is presumptuous. We have not received any notification of a strike, we have not been told of the results of a vote than is

MR. DOODY: now under way as I understnad it. If the event should occur that there is a rejection of the conciliation board's recommendation, the majority report of the conciliation board, which is what governments position is, plus some added things which government has put in since, if the NTA membership reject the conciliation board's report and government offer, then certainly I have no doubt that the NTA will be back and we will sit down and have another crack at the thing. But to say that there is going to be a strike imminent tomorrow, there is a strike brewing, you know, it just is not so, it is not true. We are waiting for the results of the teacher's vote on what the offer is right now.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: I will yield to my colleague from Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: To make it explicitly clear, I again want to ask the hon. minister, did I gather from his answer that the only reason that the government are seeking this change is so that the government may control the rate of premiums, as opposed to other benefits under the pension scheme?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. DOODY: There are two items once again that were raised, Number one, is that the government is not asking for the right to control the rate of payment, The government is asking for the right of consultation as to the level of what the payments into the fund should be. Right now the government has no say, the veto power is in the hands of the NTA. And the other part of your question was the level of change of benefits. There is no other change of benefits suggested. Everything else remains exactly as it is. We are not asking that the retirement age be changed, or that the benefits be put on the same level as the general service agreement, or that any other changes be made in the pension act. We are simply asking for a say in the level of payments into the fund, That power we do not have now. This is entirely in the hands of the NTA right now, and they are very reluctant, I understand, to give up that power.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure the minister is answering the question because I for one am not able to follow it. Let me accordingly ask him this. Are we correct in understanding that the present situation with respect to the teachers' pension plan which exists under an act of the Legislature, I assume, but is also part and parcel of the agreement - it is part of the collective agreement between the government and the school boards on one hand, and the NTA representing the teachers on the other hand - that under that collective agreement the premium rate, the rate at which a teacher pays into the pension fund, which I believe is four per cent, as the minister said, that that rate is now determined jointly by negotiation between the NTA on one hand and on the other the employers, including for this sense the government?

MR. DOODY: It cannot be changed without consulting the -

MR. ROBERTS: The minister is saying the same thing another way around, that it cannot be changed without the consent of both parties. It cannot be changed equally without the consent of the school boards, who are their employers at law, and the government who pay the shot. And so is the minister then saying that what the government want is the right to change that without the consent of the NTA, in other words unilaterally. Consultation, Mr. Speaker, is the word the minister has used, but consultation does not necessarily - it is like beauty, it is in the eye of the beholder. It does not necessarily imply anything beyond saying, "Well we would like to change it, what do you say?" Then the NTA say, "We do not think you should change it." Do the government then have the right still to change it unilaterally? That is the question, and could the minister address himself to that, Sir, I wonder?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: I think that I have addressed myself to it, and it is in the interpretation, of course, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition has said, it is very much in the eye of the beholder or the ear of the interpreter. Our view of consultation is that two responsible groups of people sit down jointly and work out what appears to be a reasonable, and seems to them to be a reasonable solution to a problem which may arise some years down the line.

If that is to be interpreted as dictatorial or as a one-sided process then of course the word "consult" should probably be stricken from the dictionary, because it serves no purpose. Our idea of consultation has been the same sort of arrangement that we have been able to work out with the NTA over the past years since this administration has taken office, and they have been a very meaningful and a very worthwhile series of consultations that have resulted in substantial benefits both in the pension plan and the level of income and in the general standards of the teaching profession generally, that we would like to see that same sort of level of consultation continued with the same sort of meaningful and helpful results to both sides. Right now, under the terms of the present collective agreement, there can be no consultation. We are completely at the mercy of the language of that particular section of the collective agreement. As I say, how it eventually turns out, what eventually develops, will be determined after the vote comes in and after the next series of discussions take place.

MR. ROBERTS: A further supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I am not allowed to debate the minister's answer, except I should maybe put it down for the Late Show tomorrow, because the minister still has not made it clear; it is now bilateral, it takes two parties to agree and what the minister seems to be saying is he wishes the power to rest in the government,

MR. ROBERTS: to do it unilaterally after a consultative process. But that is not my supplementary, Sir. My supplementary is this; have the government had made a study to indicate whether or not the rates of premiums now paid into the funds, together with the interest that would accrue thereon in respect of that capital, will be sufficient to cover the foreseeable liabilities? In other words, Sir, an actuarial study.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

M. J. Duddy
~~MR. ROBERTS:~~ No, there has not been really a legitimate actuarial study done as yet. Obviously there has to be one done. There was a brief from the NTA last year on which they based their arguments and on which we had a cursory look at by a recognized firm of chartered accountants who gave us some advice.

But there has been really no definitive or positive actuarial study either on that pension plan or on others. There is no question at all in the minds of this administration that the pension funds generally of the public service have got to be looked at far more closely than they have in the past. It has been an area of neglect and one that we are going to have to address ourselves to. I think that it is something that is long overdue, and it is not only the teachers' pension fund. There are pension funds generally that have to be looked at and looked at in a reasonable and sensible light. They have been treated, I think, far too

MR. DOODY: lackadaisically in the past, just accepted contributions to general revenue and with a guarantee of payment. I have no doubt that that guarantee is good and the payments will be met and have to be met. But as the hon. Leader has suggested, and as others have already, and we have discussed this at some length, it has to be done on a far more scientific and more businesslike manner than it has been done in the past.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance, Sir, the President of the Treasury Board. I should like to ask the minister if he would tell the House what law firm or what lawyer represented the bond purchasers in the recent \$50 million bond issue that was floated by the government? What firm in Newfoundland, or what lawyer, represented the bond purchasers?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: I do not know the name of the law firm. The law person who was engaged by the syndicate, by the people who handle the sale of the bonds in Europe, was Mr. Roberts Wells. The name of the law firm is Wells, Something, Something and Something. I am not up on terminology or the name of the law firm, but Mr. Wells was the Lawyer who was hired by the syndicate, the sales people.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Would the minister indicate to the House if the government brought any influence to bear on the syndicate to hire the law firm or to hire Mr. Wells as the lawyer, the local lawyer, to represent the bond purchasers?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: I am absolutely amazed at the question, Your Honour. Of course, we could not possible bring pressure to bear on such a group of international and renowned and very, very independent and capable business people. This practice

MR. DOODY: is absolutely unheard of and would never be even imagined in any civilized society.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. minister indicate to the House if this practice of hiring a lawyer who is supporting the government, a former minister, conforms with the policy that was laid down by the administration when they were campaigning back in 1971 and 1972, that they were going to do away with this sort of conflict of interest? Is this in keeping with the policy of the administration?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: In the first place, Sir, I think that conflict of interest thing should be stricken out of the question because, obviously, in my opinion there is no conflict of interest.

As to government's policy in this matter, it is our policy to hire the most competent people that we can. We would hope that the firms with whom we do business hire the most competent and capable people that they can. If it so happens that this very competent and capable person is also intelligent enough to be a supporter of this government, then certainly that is all to his credit and certainly a tribute to his good taste and intelligence. Certainly his ability has never been in question and I for one would never question it.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. the Minister of Finance would indicate to the House what fee Mr. Wells received in return for the services that he provided in this particular bond issue?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: That was one of the questions, I think, raised by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. In terms of the bond issue the people who are looking after it on behalf of government, the Deputy Minister of Finance and the

MR. DOODY: Assistant Deputy Minister and the representative of the Department of Justice have not yet returned from their European safari, but much to my amazement they managed to carry off this great financial coup without my assistance and without my presence.

I am sure the people in Paris are very disappointed about the fact that I could not make it but nevertheless they seem to be struggling through. So I do not have that information and I will not until they return to the Province. They are in transit somewhere between Paris, London, Gander and St. John's and then the snow storm. But as soon as I find out, or if I find them, I will get the information and when I get the information I will answer the hon. the Leader's question and then he perhaps might, during one of your little confabs, pass it on to you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member with the original line of questioning on a supplementary?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Finance if Mr. Richard Greene, the former bagman of the P.C. Party, has been notified that his services are no longer required in connection with government bond issues, and when was it?

MR. DOODY: To the best of my knowledge, Sir, we have not notified anybody that their services are no longer required either as bagman or as lawyers. I think that both serve a very useful function in society and both have been known to play a very prominent part in the activities of the political life generally.

We have not sent notices to anybody that their services will not be required. I cannot say that Mr. Greene's services will not be required, perhaps they will be sometime in the future. Who knows, we may even have to take Mr. Curtis or Mr. Dawe out of retirement and send them off on one of these journeys, but I am not in a position to make these judgements.

Mr. Doody.

We find the best talent available, but it is up to the syndicate to hire whom they want, and they hire them whenever they want to hire them. You know, I am certainly not going to dictate to Ames and these people.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A further supplementary. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: I only wish the Minister of Finance were under oath in this proceeding. But, Mr. Speaker, my question relates to the activities of his deputy and the assistant deputy, who I assume is Mr. Warriner, and whatever other officials of the Minister of Justice attended the bond closing in Paris - which by the way is a perfectly proper procedure to do - could the minister tell us whether all of the expenses incurred by these officials, all of the expenses incurred by these officials, are paid by the Government of the Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: No, I really cannot. As I say, I have not seen them since they came back. I certainly know that their travel and their hotel bills and so on are paid by the government. It may very well be that a dinner was laid on by Credit Commercial de France, by Ames or by some of the other underwriters, and I have no doubt that perhaps Mr. Warriner or Mr. Martin and the representative of the Department of Justice may very well have been invited guests at such a function.

MR. ROBERTS: I am not talking about that.

MR. DOODY: Well then the expenses of getting there and getting back and so on are paid for by the Province of Newfoundland.

MR. ROBERTS: What did they travel, economy or first-class?

MR. DOODY: Overseas, first-class, I think.

MR. ROBERTS: First-class, overseas.

MR. DOODY: I think so, yes. Certainly the ministry do.

MR. ROBERTS: These are not ministers. These are deputy ministers.

MR. DOODY: I do not know. I honestly do not know.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: A question to the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications. I refer him to page ninety-six of the Auditor General's Report, "Expenditures without legislative appropriation," referring to payments totalling \$28,820 made to consultants for services rendered in connection with a revision of the organization and operations of the department. I wonder if the minister could tell me what were the nature of these revisions and organization in his department?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I will take that question under advisement.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. HODDER: I wonder if the minister has seen the Auditor General's Report yet. This is the second question I have asked on the -

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

The hon. gentleman was recognized to ask a supplementary, but not to sort of debate directly or indirectly the minister's answer. Does the hon. gentleman wish to rephrase his question?

MR. STRACHAN: Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Go ahead. He does not wish to rephrase his question.

The hon. member for Eagle River, followed by the gentleman for LaPoile.

MR. STRACHAN: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Mines and Energy. Mr. Speaker, I am ^{having} difficulty checking the accuracy of the minister's statement made here in the House yesterday concerning the energy conservation proposal between the federal government and the government of this Province. I am wondering whether the minister would let us know whether he intends to table attachments A, B, and C, because we only have attachment D here, and we cannot check the

Mr. Strachan.

accuracy of the proposal unless we have these attachments tabled in the House.

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

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) will find out from the clerks of the House, the officers of the House, because of the urgency of getting this matter before the hon. House, I was only able to have two attachments, but on the original statement that I read from, attached to it was all the other attachments which I assumed the officers of the House would get copies of for the enlightenment of hon. members.

MR. ROBERTS: They have not been distributed.

MR. STRACHAN: They have not been distributed.

MR. PECKFORD: So I would just ask Mr. Speaker if it is possible for the officers of the House to provide that information?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Anything that is tabled, it is the clerk and his associates who are responsible for its distribution.

MR. STRACHAN: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. STRACHAN: Is the minister saying that he then tabled attachments A, B, and C, that they were tabled yesterday?

MR. PECKFORD: I think that is what the hon. member can take from my statement, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: A question for the Minister of Fisheries, Sir.

Could the minister tell the House what steps, if any, his department or the government have taken to deal with this very serious and urgent matter of seal meat, large portions of seal meat being left on the ice in various parts of the Province at the present time?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the House that the officials of the Department of Fisheries, along with those of my colleague, the Minister of Industrial and Rural Development, have initiated a pilot project in the Notre Dame Bay area where they are aimed at producing a top quality seal meat that we hope will be marketed through the various local retail outlets. Officials of both departments have worked on this for quite some time and they are working with a company, Notre Dame Fisheries Limited, I think it is the Eveleigh Company in Comfort Cove, who are supplying certain wrapping materials and certain machinery. The company will be processing the meats. And maybe by next weekend, actually, we are hoping that by next weekend on the shelves of the local outlets in St. John's we hope there will be choice cuts of seal steak and roast. Like I said, it is being prepared under very, very extremely sanitary conditions. The seals are being landed, eviscerated and frozen, or at least stuffed with ice, and later cut and bled and prepared, vacuum sealed in a very attractive package and sent to the various supermarkets.

This, Mr. Speaker, is a beginning, and we are working on other arrangements, my colleague and I, with respect to the processing of this very important meat. Maybe if this one works we will later, maybe this year, certainly next year, get involved in a more extensive processing capability when it comes to seal meat. But like I said, by next weekend Newfoundlanders, certainly people in this area, should be able to buy seal meat properly packaged, properly wrapped, competitively priced and, like I said, all prepared with the help of both departments and the Notre Dame Fisheries Limited.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary question to the minister, Sir. And I thank the hon. minister for the information. I did not realize when I asked the question that the two ministers had done their homework. Mr. Speaker, in connection now with the cannery in Comfort Cove, I presume it is going to be reactivated as it has been closed down for some time?

AN HON. MEMBER: No doubt.

MR. NEARY: Well the reports on radio or in the newspaper said it was closed down, and I presume it is going to be reactivated now. But will the fishermen have to bring their carcasses, their meat, to the canning factory in Comfort Cove or will they have people go around in trucks in the various places and pick it up? Because a lot of this seal meat is quite a distance away as the minister knows. How will they get it to the cannery?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, it is not a simple matter when it comes to the processing of seal meat. They tell me that if a seal is pelted and the carcass left on the ice, that the fat apparently permeates the meat and just about spoils it. But to produce a top quality seal meat it must be delivered to the plant with the pelt still on, eviscerated, pelt on with ice in the interior of the seal.

I suspect that at the beginning fishermen will have to bring their seals to the plant. But like I said, things are progressing and hopefully the whole operation can be expanded and maybe at some date in the future, and hopefully this year, the company will probably be able to go out and collect seals. But certainly it is a start and we believe that with the help that we are giving that company that they can produce a top quality product and one that will be acceptable to most consumers in the city and other parts of the Province.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the original question?

MR. NEARY: Would the minister be in a position to tell the House just how long the carcass of meat will remain in top condition with the flipper on? How long, you know, how many days can the fishermen keep it if they pack it with ice and so forth?

MR. W. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I do not pretend to be an expert on seals or seal meat but I do not think it would last that long. Frozen seal meat, I am told, can probably last for years. But this will not be frozen, it will be chilled with ice, loose ice packed in the seal, in the cavity.

PREMIER MOORES: It would last a fair while because it comes in from a long distance.

MR. W. CARTER: Well it would last quite a distance because the conditions under which the seal has been killed and transported would pretty well be ideal, I suppose, lower temperatures. But as to the exact time I cannot answer that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo I believe has a supplementary.

CAPT. WINSOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo has a supplementary.

CAPT. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, will the minister inform the House what kind of seal is he talking about? It is certainly not the white coat. Is it the bedlamer, the bay seal, the netted seal?

MR. FLIGHT: The Christmas Seal.

CAPT. WINSOR: When we are talking about flippers, Mr. Speaker, I do not think the minister is trying to give the impression to the House that we are talking about the choice meat when we think of the flipper as we know them which is taken from the carcass of the white coats.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Tut, tut, tut, tut, tut, tut.

CAPT. WINSOR: Tut, Tut, Tut, I am asking the minister.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: They are old seals. We all know that.

CAPT. WINSOR: If they are old seals then they are not choice meat. This is my point.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER: My advice to the hon. gentleman is not to knock it until we have had a chance to prove it first.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. W. CARTER: That kind of a comment, Mr. Speaker, if I can finish the answer to the hon. member's question, that kind of a comment will add very little to the success of the project.

MR. ROBERTS: Unless it happens to be a truthful one, unlike what the minister came up with.

MR. W. CARTER: Is the hon. Leader suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that I am not telling the truth?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. WHITE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FLIGHT: I yield to the supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! there is time for one further question, if the hon. gentleman wishes to yield, then the hon. member for Lewisporte with a supplementary.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, it is a supplementary in connection with this seal meat. I wonder if the minister would tell us whether or not rules and regulations are to be brought in to prohibit the selling of seal meat from the backs of trucks and other things such as that in St. John's and other places which would ruin the market for this delicious, properly prepared seal meat from Notre Dame Bay.

MR. MURPHY: Do not try to do away with Steers Cove in my district.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MURPHY: The only industry I have.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, the sale of flippers and seal meat from the backs of trucks I suppose is as old as the industry itself. Certainly I suppose the Department of Health have already looked at the requirements and the standards but I am not sure if we have any regulations at the moment that would prohibit the sale of flippers or meat. I am not even sure if we would want it. Like I said, it is an old and a very traditional custom in the city.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

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MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, before we go to Orders of the Day may I raise a point of privilege of the House. I do not raise it in any censorious sense, but the Minister of Mines and Energy in answering a question asked by my colleague from Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) said quite specifically that certain letters had been tabled in the House yesterday, Sir. I have checked with the officers at the table and they tell me that to the best of their knowledge, Sir, the specific letters were

MR. ROBERTS: not tabled. Now I do not raise that as I said in a censorious sense. What I ask the minister is can we have an assurance that the letters in question, which were referred to with attachments "A", "B" and "C" of his statement, will be made available - I care not whether to the officers at the table or to the House at large -but will be made available as he said they would be?

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, can I -

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. member but I was just informed by the Clerk Assistant and this might inform both hon. gentlemen.

MR. PECKFORD: I know, Mr. Speaker, that the letters were tabled and that the Clerks have found the relevant documents referred to by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPEAKER: I have just been informed by one of the officers at the table, and apparently it just came to their attention or they have just located it within the past minute or so, these particular items which it would appear were tabled, and whether mislaid or put in the wrong file, that I cannot say.

MR. ROBERTS: But they will be distributed now, will they?

MR. SPEAKER: They will be distributed. Yes.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. SPEAKER: Today being Private Members' Day, motion one, the adjourned debate on that resolution, Debate was adjourned by the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the motion to which I would like to address myself for a few minutes was moved by my colleague from Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) and I listened with great attention to what he had to say on the subject of the motion which reads in parts, "This House is gravely concerned with the state and sentiment of public opinion in Labrador."

Mr. Speaker, I am quite prepared to do a little talking if I could

MR. SIMMONS: get rid of some of the hum in the House. There are several meetings going on at the moment.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. gentleman wishes to be heard in silence.

MR. SIMMONS: As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, my colleague and friend from Eagle River moved a motion last week which says in part, "That the House would express its grave concern over the state and sentiment of public opinion in Labrador, and further that the House would seek to appoint a Select Committee to consider and study matters pertaining to the state and sentiment of public opinion in Labrador." The motion

MR. SIMMONS: moved by my colleague goes on to provide that the proposed select committee would, among other assignments, consider reports and recommendations that have been submitted to government over the years, receive briefs and representations from various organizations and individuals and agencies, and would have authority to sit throughout the province and then ultimately would report its findings and recommendations hopefully to the House of Assembly and again, hopefully, for action.

As I say, I listened with great interest to what my friend from Eagle River had to say on the subject, as I did to those comments made by the subsequent speaker the member for Naskaupi. I always find I listen to him with particular attention because as the only native-born Labradorian in these chambers, of course he brings to the debate, has the capability to bring to the debate a certain unique dimension. I listened also with equal care to the following speaker, the member for Grand Falls, the Minister of Industrial and Rural Development.

As the fourth speaker in this particular debate, I hope only the fourth of many speakers because it is probably one of the more important issues we will consider during this session of the House and one of the more important issues we have considered, perhaps for a long time.

AN HON. MEMBER: You are speaking fourth.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, I am the fourth. The Minister of Industrial and Rural Development was the third speaker, after the member for Naskaupi and the member for Eagle River. And as I said, I hope I am just the fourth of many speakers on this subject because I am anxious to hear the views of the various members on this particular issue and, even more importantly, anxious to see what the resolution of this particular motion will be and whether or not we will indeed get a Select Committee appointed to address

MR. SIMMONS: itself to the problem Mr. Speaker, this topic, considered in the context of a debating vehicle, lends itself admirably to a fire and brimstone, free-for-all, rousing partisan type of debate. As a political partisan I can call to mind all kinds of arguments to demonstrate that not enough has been done in Labrador: The meager municipal and community services along the south and north coast of Labrador, the continuing physical isolation in those areas, the disposition of the Snowden Royal Commission Report concerning Labrador, the recent and abortive effort to launch a Labrador Development Corporation, the economic uncertainty prevalent in the Happy Valley-Goose Bay area, the lack of a service industry in the western part of Labrador, all these issues and a host of others, Mr. Speaker, can be readily summoned to help make a partisan case that not enough has been done in Labrador. At the same time and equally, Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the government benches contain no shortage of men who are quite capable of mounting a spirited defence of the administration's achievements and efforts in Labrador. There is no guarantee that the debate on this particular motion will not proceed along exactly those lines that I have just sketched. With those of us on this side mounting a great litany of undone things in Labrador, and with those on the government side mounting an equally spirited defense of what has been achieved, there is no guarantee that will not happen.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, at the outset, I hope it does not happen. Should that become the case, I believe it will be not only a crying shame, but much more significantly, I believe that kind of debate on this particular subject will do

Mr. Simmons:

a very grave disservice, not only to the mover of the motion, but to the very intent of the motion, and an equally grave disservice to the concerns which this motion embodies, and an equally grave disservice to the people of Labrador, and let me go further, I believe an equally grave disservice to the future of this Province.

The motion moved by my friend from Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) is a very simple motion, but at the same time a very important one. The wording of the motion is non-partisan. You will not find in any of the preamble, indeed there is no preamble for this very reason, you will not find any preamble which condemns the government for what it has not done or which condemns the government for what it has done that it should not have done.

This motion is deliberately a very non-partisan motion in terms of its wording, and in terms of its intent. Because, Mr. Speaker, it is not the intent of the mover or the intent of any who support this motion, to clobber the government or to lay blame for the present situation in Labrador.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that this debate will not become a shouting match across the House. I hope it will not become an exercise in me-tooism, in which we line up in our respective groups according to party labels. I hope it will not be a shouting match, but rather a rational approach to a very serious situation. I hope it will not become an exercise over the next few Wednesdays, an exercise in scoring partisan points, but rather a much more worth-while exercise in comparing notes about our concerns, our respective concerns, our deeply felt concerns for Labrador.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, the debate which will extend today and probably over other Wednesdays, I hope it will not be a confrontation of opposing viewpoints, but rather an affirmation on the part of all of us to do together, to begin doing together some of the things that must be done in Labrador.

Mr. Simmons:

As I have said, the motion is a very simple one. The motion asks only that the House appoint a Select Committee. A Select Committee, Mr. Speaker, not another study, not a royal commission that is going to take months or years to complete, and then, in the tradition of royal commission reports no matter what government has appointed the commission, in the tradition of such reports to find itself on some shelf somewhere gathering dust while the problem continues, and escalates and aggravates.

The motion is not proposing some royal commission or some long-winded study. What is proposing, Mr. Speaker, is a Select Committee, five, seven members of this House of Assembly who will go to Labrador and go there fairly soon in the next three, five, in the next few weeks and listen to the people of Labrador so that the Committee can come back having listened and attest to the truth or otherwise contained in the statements in this resolution.

MR. SIMMONS:

The people of Labrador cannot all come here to this House and make their concerns known, so let us take the House to the people of Labrador. Let us send five, seven, whatever number of people, to Labrador to hear what the people have to say. You see, Mr. Speaker, it is this House and only this House which has the legislative power, the authority, to right some of the wrongs in Labrador.

I do not suggest for one moment, Mr. Speaker, that all the ills of Labrador can be corrected by legislation. But I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is one of the beginning points, one of the very important beginning points. As I have said, we are the only people who can launch that kind of a beginning, a legislative beginning. We are the people who can through legislation make the right decisions about Labrador while there is time to make them.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think we can make very intelligent decisions about Labrador if we continue to sit in St. John's as armchair experts. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I feel very strongly that a great part of the problem as it relates to Labrador is that too many of the decisions affecting Labrador have been made in ignorance and in St. John's. The Select Committee is our attempt to begin to change that process.

A significant element in the Labrador issue I believe is the very diversity which exists within that great land mass. You would have to look far and wide across this hemisphere and indeed around the world to find comparable diversity represented among so relatively few people. The 40,000 souls or so who have their home, their domicile in various parts of Labrador constitute an amazingly broad spectrum of economic station, of cultural background, of value system and of aspiration.

Picture, for example, the unionized iron ore worker in Labrador City with a gross annual salary approximating \$20,000, with access to a full range of municipal services as complete as available almost anywhere in the industrialized world. Compare him, if you would, or contrast his situation if you would, the situation of the iron worker, on the one hand, with the seasonal fisherman who spends his Summers

MR. SIMMONS:

at Snug Harbour on the Coast of Labrador and his Winters at Norman Bay, a kerosene lamp as his only light source, his access to health services dependent on fair weather and the availability of an aircraft. Or consider the sometimes logger in Goose Bay, whose life pattern is a curious mix of insecurity and apprehension because of the developing situation involving Labrador Linerboard, or the close out of the American base and other such blows to the economy of that area,

Mr. Simmons.

and compare that would-be logger in Goose Bay to the electrician at Churchill Falls, just a scant few miles to the West, the electrician with relative affluence but at the same time a very stifling claustrophobia, a very real lack of roots compared to a logger in Goose Bay or the seasonal fishermen on the coast. Other comparisons could be made between those who live on the North Coast of Labrador and those who live on the South Coast. I am not suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that the lot of the iron ore worker in Labrador City or Wabush is better than that of the seasonal fishermen, nor am I suggesting that the lot of the fishermen is better than that of the iron ore worker. Who are we here in St. John's to judge that the urban trappings of Wabush - Labrador City can in any way compensate for the uprooting from the ancestral homes of Trinity Bay or the Southwest Coast.

The Lion's Club member in Labrador City who goes to Hamilton, Ontario for his regional meeting is certainly operating in a very different world than the representative of the Inuit people in Nain who travels to Cambridge Bay for his meeting, as did the late and highly esteemed Martin Martin of that community accompanied, I believe, by the wife of the member for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) a couple of years ago. But how different are the worlds. The Inuit going off to Cambridge Bay, many miles North of Winnipeg, to have dialogue on problems which confronts him in his particular realm, and the Lion's Club member tripping off to Hamilton, Ontario to share with his particular fraternity. How different are the two worlds, and how dramatic is the contrast when we think of it in that particular context. And yet these people at home occupy the same land mass, albeit a fairly large land mass, but these people are just two of a relatively small total number of people, two of about 40,000. And so the contrast could go on, and we could continue to compare and to contrast the peoples who live in

Mr. Simmons.

various parts of Labrador, to point out how great is the diversity within Labrador. And as I have submitted a few moments ago, I believe that diversity, which exists within Labrador, is a significant element in the complex issue which faces this Province insofar as Labrador and its future within the Province is concerned. In a thousand and one ways people in various parts of Labrador relate to very, very different worlds. And many of these worlds are strikingly unlike, very unlike, dramatically unlike the set of circumstances to which we relate here on the Island of Newfoundland, all of which brings me to what I believe is the crux of the situation, the crux of the situation insofar as our inability to deal with it is concerned. We who have lived here on the Island, and that includes almost every member of this House with the exception of the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie), and to some degree the member for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan), with that exception everyone of us who sits in this House has spent just about either all our life or just about all our lives here on this Island,

MR. SIMMONS:

involved in the set of circumstances which is particular to this Island and which is not necessarily very like the kinds of circumstances I have outlined as they apply to Labrador. We who live here on the Island and who have a well-developed penchant for categorizing everything that is urban or rural as St. John's and down the bay, is it any wonder that we have so little comprehension of the diversity of life styles which is Labrador? Is it any wonder that we have committed the error of thinking of Labrador as a whole bunch of outports?

Our chronic myopia on this matter, our chronic nearsightedness on this issue is absolutely incredible. I hope, Mr. Speaker, we do not add stubbornness to myopia. I hope we do not dig in our heels as a people in this House for partisan reasons or whatever reasons and decide to look the other way, or worse still decide that we understand the problem completely and then proceed to apply another Band-Aid solution.

The Labrador issue as described in this motion, Mr. Speaker, is a very real one. During the past twelve months it has been my privilege to visit various parts of Labrador five times. I have not been South of Paradise River or Cartwright in the last year, though I have been there earlier. But otherwise I have been to all parts of Labrador from Paradise River in the South to Nain in the North on the Coast, the Happy Valley-Goose Bay-Northwest River area. I have not visited Mud Lake in the last year though it was my privilege just four or five years ago to do so. Also in the last year I have been able to get into Labrador City, Wabush, and Churchill Falls on a couple of occasions in the case of each community.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, not as one who is any expert on Labrador but as one who has been there a few times, perhaps more frequently than most members of this House other than those who reside in Labrador -

CAPT. WINSOR: I was elected in Labrador for years.

MR. SIMMONS: - or indeed most Newfoundlanders, and there are exceptions. My good friend from Fogo (Capt. Winsor) reminds me - and I had forgotten - that he for a good many years of course represented Labrador. It is so

MR. SIMMONS:

easy to forget that there are people in the House, not only older in years than we are, but older in their knowledge of Labrador. And it is not my intent to stand here and profess a great knowledge of Labrador but to say to my friend from Fogo (Capt. Winsor) and others that while I have only been there four or five times in the last year, that oddly enough is more times than most people in this House and most Newfoundlanders have been to other parts of their own Province and indeed other parts of their Island. I say it not, as I say, to become the expert on Labrador or to pose as the expert but to draw attention to the lack of knowledge which all of us collectively have about Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, having been there a few times and having seen, I can confirm what those who live there and who are much more intimately involved with this issue have been saying all along, that the issue is a very real one. The issue which my colleague from Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) poses in this motion is as real as the light of day. We would be fools and irresponsibles to ignore it or to talk our way around it. Let us, Mr. Speaker, not make the costly mistake of pretending the problem, the issue, the sentiment, does not exist.

The most cruel injustice we can commit against the people of Labrador, and indeed against the future well-being of this Province, is to attempt to minimize, to down play the problems, to sweep the problem, to sweep the issue, to sweep the fact of the growing sentiment under the carpet,

Mr. Simmons: to continue to apply those Band-Aid solutions.

Labrador, Mr. Speaker, is chock-full, brimful, full to overflowing of examples of such Band-Aid solutions, Band-Aid approaches, which far from helping to cure have only served to aggravate.

The alienation movement, and I would call it that rather than a separatist movement at this particular time - the term 'separatist movement' suggests to me that a conclusion has been reached among the people, and I am not sure it has. That is not to say that they have not locked up inside of them, a lot of frustrations on the subject - but I would term it for the purpose of my discussion here an alienation movement, a very real one.

That alienation movement is being funded, Mr. Speaker, by both levels of government. And that, Mr. Speaker, is not a partisan charge. I say both levels of government, federal and provincial, Liberal and P.C. That alienation movement is being fostered by money from the taxpayers. I am not suggesting for one moment that the government, either federal or provincial, has deliberately fuelled the alienation. I do not believe at all that was the case, nothing could be further from the truth. But, Mr. Speaker, I am saying that in a hasty effort to treat the patient, if I may use an analogy, to treat in a hasty effort to treat the patients before the diagnosis is fully understood, massive amounts of money have been poured into organizations in Labrador, money which is being used de facto, money which is being used de facto for purposes very different than those purposes intended by government.

I said, Mr. Speaker, a few moment ago that I believe that one of the dangers in discussing and debating this motion is to understate, to play down the sentiment to which this motion addresses itself. One of the dangers is to pretend it does not exist, to hope it will go away. I would submit that an equally hazardous course of pursuit would be to overstate the issue, to unduly inflate the issue out of all proportion, to over dramatize. I see that as a very real possibility and a real danger as well.

MR. SIMMONS:

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the expression of my deep concern for this issue will not be misconstrued by my listeners as overstatement, but rather as an honest and a realistic expression of the issue as I understand it.

Mr. Speaker, this motion is a plea, a plea from the member for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan), one who sees firsthand the dangers involved in not coming to grips with the sentiment. One who sees firsthand the

MR. SIMMONS: inherent dangers if we fail to arrive at an equitable solution to the dilemma which we face in Labrador.

 This motion is a plea from the people of Labrador, a plea to come to Labrador and to listen, a plea to us as members of this House. We cannot all go but we can send five or seven as a select committee. The plea to us here in the House to come to Labrador and to listen and to apply a yardstick to the sentiment which does exist there, not only to the sentiment, but to its basis, to ask why does it exist and to ask what is the resolution of the issue?

 This motion, Mr. Speaker, is a plea from all in these chambers here, and indeed all in this Province who have faith in the future of Newfoundland and Labrador. I do hope that the plea will be heard for it is a plea to the House of Assembly to do something, something concrete, about Labrador. It is a plea to begin doing that something now.

 I would see the select committee moving into high gear just as soon as the motion receives House approval, presuming it would. And I would hope the committee's work would not be any dragged out affair, any royal commission under another disguise, another long-winded study that has no completion date. There is no reason, Mr. Speaker, why this committee could not get down to business as soon as it is appointed, go to Labrador reasonably soon, travel around Labrador, hear the viewpoints, the various expressions of these viewpoints, assess the situation. There is not reason, Mr. Speaker, why the committee could not complete its work and report to the House during this session, report to the House during this session either later this Spring or sometime early in the Fall.

 Mr. Speaker, it is not an equitable solution of the Churchill Falls dispute with Quebec which will solve the Labrador issue as articulated in this motion. I

MR. SIMMONS: repeat, it is not an equitable resolution to the Churchill Falls' dispute with Quebec which will solve the Labrador issue. A decision to proceed or not to proceed on Gull Island will not be the panacea that will cure all the ills of Labrador. A Trans-Labrador highway

Mr. Simmons.

will not be the salvation of Labrador. All these, the Churchill Falls issue, the Gull Island issue, the highway issue, all these have implications for the economic and the social development of Labrador, and indeed for the economic and social development of the Province as a whole. But, Mr. Speaker, whether Churchill Falls or Gull Island or a highway contributes to a solution to the dilemma posed in this motion, or whether Churchill Falls or Gull Island or a highway helps only to magnify, to aggravate the dilemma even further, remains to be seen.

There are, however, Mr. Speaker, initiatives which must be taken if the destinies of the people of Labrador and of Newfoundland are to continue to be intermingled to their common benefit. I do not pretend to know what all of these initiatives must be, but I am convinced of two things. First, the initiatives we have taken thus far have not worked, and in some cases, have backfired badly. And second, I am convinced that we will do irrefutable damage to the cause if we persist in continuing to apply Band-Aid solutions without first launching a determined endeavour to understand the true dimensions of the dilemma which confronts us in Labrador, the dilemma which is so well stated in the motion moved by my colleague from Eagle River.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding, just let me reinforce the last two statements I have made. First, that I am strongly of the opinion that the steps that have been taken so far, the initiatives that have been taken by government, whatever the political stripe whether federal or provincial, those initiatives at best have not worked, and at worst have worked only to our detriment and as a Province, and to the detriment in particular of the people who inhabit, who make their domicile in Labrador. And secondly, Mr. Speaker, I am of the strong and urgent opinion that we cannot afford, that we can ill afford to continue on this tack of applying Band-Aid solutions

Mr. Simmons.

before we stand back and assess the true dimensions of the sentiment so well described in the motion. It is in this spirit, Mr. Speaker, that I support the motion moved by my colleague, the member for Eagle River. It is in this spirit that I have quite deliberately during the course of my few remarks not attempted to assign blame, to attribute fault or to point fingers, but rather to use my speaking opportunity in the debate to call attention, as I am sure others will,

MR. SIMMONS: to what is a very real fact of life for all of us, whether we live on the Island or in Labrador, a very real fact of life and a continuing fact of life which has staggering import for the future of the province and for our future as a people. And I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that all of us as we enter into this debate, will look upon the proposal of a select committee, not as a debating vehicle, not as a way of having an academic exercise in these chambers and scoring points of each other, but rather let us analyse carefully in our preparation for this debate, and in debating itself, let us analyse carefully carefully whether this select committee, composed of us as members, five or seven of these members in this House, let us ask ourselves honestly and without blind allegiance to party lines or to whatever other forces that normally bind us, let us ask ourselves quite openly and honestly whether perhaps this vehicle, this select committee, may not have the potential of being a very productive beginning towards addressing ourselves to the sentiment expressed in this motion.

It is in that spirit, Mr. Speaker, that I am very pleased to give my full support to the motion. Thank You. X

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

X MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to delay the House very long. I want to add my comments to the resolution because I think it is an important subject. I think the fact that hon. members may have different views or be of different opinions in terms of whether we support or otherwise this resolution, should not in any way detract or be misinterpreted as a lack of concern or a lack of interest in the subject that is before us. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important that hon. members participate in this debate and set at rest once and for all, or to put in proper perspective,

MR. HICKEY: the whole question of Labrador in relation to the province, to the Island part of the province, and the question of Labrador separating. One, Mr. Speaker, must arrive at the conclusion that when people, be it a minority group or otherwise, who talk about separating, one must arrive at the conclusion that they are unhappy with what they have, or with their place within the overall structure of the province.

The minority group in the province of Quebec, and I say minority because, Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe, as do a great number of Canadians, maybe the majority of Canadians believe that it is a minority group who talk of separating the province of Quebec, make it very clear why they wish separation. One can quarrel with those views, obviously any of us who believe in this country can appreciate the stand that a lot of us take with regards to that province.

MR. HICKEY:

The resolution at hand, Mr. Speaker, more than anything else, I think addresses itself to the question of the unrest in Labrador. But to put it very bluntly - and I think we should put it bluntly and we should not couch it in any other terms - it is fine to put it that way, by way of resolution, but in the kind of debate that this resolution warrants and demands I think we should be very blunt and honest with the people of Labrador, for that matter the people of the whole Province.

Those of us on this side should make very clear government's position with regards to the question of Labrador separating from the rest of the Province. To do anything other than that, I think, Mr. Speaker, would be in fact just an exercise, quite possibly an exercise in futility or a waste of time. So I think we should seriously address ourselves to the question.

Now the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) made some comments, some of which I agree with. When he says that this should not be a heated partisan debate, I agree it should not. And whoever might share my view, I do not think the - certainly I will be charitable enough not to think that the member putting forward this resolution did not have this in mind. Certainly I will not imply that his motives were anything other than sincere when he brought in this resolution.

I do not agree with the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) though when he says that we should not on this side at least catalogue some of the things that have been done. Because as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, if one talks about separatism, one really is talking about people who are discontent with their surroundings, discontent with the services that are being provided to them, discontent with the attention that is being paid to them or the manner in which they are viewed or looked upon in the whole concept of the Province. In order for one to address themselves to this question, therefore they must by necessity make reference to some things which are being done and have been done or the things which are to be done. So it is virtually impossible to

MR. HICKEY:

debate in a meaningful way the question that is before us without drawing hon. members attention to the situation in Labrador today versus five or ten years ago.

I do not think for one second, Mr. Speaker - and it is for this reason that I find it impossible for me to support this resolution - I do not think for one second that a select committee of this hon. House or any other kind of a committee to be set up would serve the whole question that is put before us. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we might well be accused - and I say properly so, if we were to follow this suggestion of a select committee - of the very thing that the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir refers to and that is Band-Aid treatment to a very big issue or a very big problem. I do not see - and I say this with all sincerity - I do not see the separatist issue or the issue of unrest in Labrador as being a monumental problem. I see the issues that probably give rise to this feeling as being monumental. But I will not accept the suggestion that the desire to separate is widespread in Labrador. I cannot accept that fact, Mr. Speaker, because there are too many reasons for the people of Labrador to want to remain part of this Province. There are too many advantages as opposed to going it alone.

Let us take, for example, one of the problems in Labrador, namely the two different groups of people who inhabit that vast land, the settlers versus the natives.

Mr. Hickey:

Let us ask ourselves the question, what is it that the settlers of Labrador want, be it in Labrador City, be it on the Coast, be it in Goose Bay, be it wherever? I suggest, Mr. Speaker, they want equal treatment as citizens of this Province. They want good services as citizens of this Province. They want similar opportunities to determine their own destiny as the rest of the citizens of this Province. In other words, we can put it in a nutshell by saying that they want everything that the citizens of this Province want and demand on the Island part of the Province. Is there anything wrong with that, Sir? I say on behalf of this administration, no, there is nothing wrong with that, for we acknowledge that, and we adhere to that, and endorse that, and are working tediously to bring that situation about. I further say, Mr. Speaker, that to continue on the course that we have embarked upon is the answer to whatever unrest is present in Labrador, and not to give credence to the issue of separatism by a Select Committee or any other organization or body to study it. Mr. Speaker, if there is anything that should turn off the people of Labrador it is the word or words 'Committee' and 'Studies'. They have been studied to death.

There is another thing, Mr. Speaker, that should very quickly turn off the people of Labrador, and that is for a government to pay lip service, and not much more, to the problems that beset those people. Mr. Speaker, if I am accused of being partisan when I say this, I hope I am not, because I state a fact, I do not say it in any partisan way, and I am the first to acknowledge that partisan kinds of debate should be kept out of this issue.

But as I said earlier, one cannot address themselves to the question at hand without making reference to what is presently going on, and what has not gone on in the past, or the conditions ten years ago versus the conditions today.

Mr. Hickey:

I suggest, Your Honour, one of the things that encouraged the kind of unrest among the minority group in Labrador is the kind of lip service that was given those people in relation to their problems. For so many years while they acknowledged, and while they were very clear that the great storehouse of resources were being tapped to help develop other parts of this Province, and while they did not feel they were getting their fair share in return for what was being taken out.

Mr. Speaker, this administration does not quarrel with those people who expound that theory or belief. We agree wholeheartedly with it. And as I said, it is for this reason that we address ourselves very seriously and constantly to the improvement of the situation in Labrador, the further development of Labrador, and only in this way will we show the people, even this minority group however many there are, that to expound on the theory of separatism, or for a government to acknowledge that theory, and address itself to that theory by way of study or what have you, is not the answer. The people of Labrador want action, not study. The people of Labrador want results, want solutions to their problems, not an acknowledgement,

Mr. Hickey.

for governments for the past twenty-five years or more have been telling the people of Labrador, "We acknowledge your problem, we know your problem." They have been told that, Mr. Speaker, when indeed the government did not know their problem. The issues of Labrador were studied in great detail by the Snowden Commission. And this administration, while it has not solved all their problems or maybe not even scratched the surface, because there are a great number of problems, and a great many problems which are most difficult, which are monumental in terms of the problems that we meet and confront every day on the Island part of the Province. - the very geography of Labrador warrants special consideration - makes the problems there monumental as compared to the other parts of the Province. What would a Select Committee do to this whole question of unrest? I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it would do nothing but fan the fires of the minority group whose motives, I am not sure - some, at least, I am not sure of. Some I can accept as being most sincere - and I could only acknowledge that, at least in my opinion, which is only one person's opinion, are ill-advised or led astray or are groping in the dark for a solution, and in doing so catches the whole issue of separatism.

This administration, Mr. Speaker, must not be railroaded by a pressure group or by an emotional issue such as separatism into finding solutions to the problems of Labrador. But the problems of Labrador, Mr. Speaker, must be well thought out and developed. All the issues facing the people of Labrador must be met in a planned way, not a response to emotionalism, not a response for political consideration. Why I remember three years or three and one-half years ago, when the member who sat opposite, representing the old district of Labrador North, when the word 'separatism' or 'unrest' had not really found its way in the media, at least, not to any great extent, and in the debate on the issue of the bridge across North West River, almost threatened

Mr. Hickey.

the administration that if it was not done, Labrador would be lost. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that kind of approach, that kind of response, that kind of representation, does not and will not help the people of Labrador. In fact, it will ill serve the people of Labrador. It will play into the hands of those few, who maybe even believe in the concept as do that few in the Province of Quebec. And those people, Mr. Speaker, who ride the back of a separatist movement, be it for either Quebec or Labrador, will end up inside. It is a lost cause. It is certainly not an issue. It is not an issue for one to get behind. I do not quarrel with the fact that it is an issue to be dealt with, and to be acknowledged. What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, in so many words is that this administration does acknowledge that there is a problem there, does acknowledge that there are people in the Labrador area of the Province who talk separation.

MR. HICKEY: What is being done now that was not done before? What has this administration done to cool the fires, as it were, of any movement towards separation? I suggest, Mr. Speaker, a great deal and without much of the fanfare that one expects to accompany projects and improvements of one kind and another.

The difficult situation to understand is that while those people who expound the theory of separatism or unrest or what have you, when faced with a positive kind of project or a project which will help the people of Labrador, instantly come forward with the response that we do not want any development, and I refer to some of the native groups in Labrador.

Two national parks being planned: Parks Canada in conjunction with my own department, and before Parks Canada ever went into Labrador, Mr. Speaker, they were advised that under no circumstances would there be a park in Labrador without absolute and full consultation and co-operation with this government and with the appropriate department. Why, Mr. Speaker? Very simply this; so that the people of Labrador, be it native or settler, would have absolute and total input, would have an absolute and total opportunity to reflect their views as to whatever changes in lifestyle or culture or anything else pertaining to them as they live in Labrador.

An Advisory Council in Labrador is already in operation, Mr. Speaker, funded by this administration who, among other things it cannot be denied, is funded for the purpose of bringing to the attention of this administration the problems and any unrest there is in Labrador, to pressure, or lobby, or what have you, this administration. God knows, although they are funded by this administration they are certainly not silent in their criticism of this administration from time to time, nor should they be. Is that not a sounding board for the

MR. HICKEY: people of Labrador to use? Or a vehicle, as it were, for the people of Labrador to use to put forth its views and its suggestions or its ideas? I say, Mr. Speaker, it is, and a much more responsible one than a select committee. Because a select committee, no matter how it is made up, it is a political organization as such. Politics, partisanship politics, will, no matter what, creep in to the functioning of that committee. I need not be told, Mr. Speaker, I have served on them. I have served on a few.

I have had the pleasure of covering Labrador. I am very fortunate to be able to say that I have covered all of Labrador. Western Labrador, Churchill Falls, Wabush and Labrador City, Southern Labrador and Coastal Labrador, the North. And while I do not claim in any way to know all there is about Labrador, I certainly have a working knowledge of the area and the problems and the people. I think that what must be acknowledged and what must be faced is a very simple fact. As I said, the settlers who live in Labrador, be it in Labrador City or Wabush, be it Churchill Falls or Goose Bay, in the industrial areas or the large areas or urban areas, whatever you want to call them,

MR. HICKEY: want and demand services similar to those people on the Island, and I say, and we say as an administration, that that is not unreasonable. It is a matter of geography. It is a matter of it being a monumental task. It is a matter of how quick and how soon this kind of service can be brought to those people, and I say it cannot get to them too soon, the sooner the better.

What about the other group? The other group, Mr. Speaker, are the natives. And this is where some of the unrest is coming from, maybe a good portion or a good percentage of it, and let me say that in my view I think that hon. members of this House should again make their position very clear and should not engage in pussyfooting around or sitting on the fence. Let them take their stand and let them deliver an answer to the native people of Labrador on some critical issues.

One - do the laws of this Province apply to the natives in Labrador as they do on the people on the Island? I say they do. I say they must. For the native people of Labrador elected to go with and to look for the same kind of services that the people on this Island, or in any other part of this Province, look for. They therefore elected to live in a society which is civilized and which in no way reflects what was 100, or 200 or 300 years ago. The Indian population of Labrador, or the Eskimo population of Labrador, I submit, Mr. Speaker, have no more right to special status in terms of wildlife regulations than the people on this Island or any part of it.

Now it is a fact of life that they have special status in certain areas with regards to certain issues. While a citizen on the Island part of the Province have to take his or her chance to get a licence to hunt a caribou or a moose, the people in Labrador who have established residence and who meet the resident requirement are allowed eight per family. Why is this, Mr. Speaker? There is a great fallacy and a great misunderstanding, and I think it should be made, and I want

MR. HICKEY: to make it very clear as the minister responsible, a great fallacy that this is done so as to cater to the Eskimo population or the Inidan population of Labrador. Nothing, Your Honour, can be further from the truth. Those people are given that special status so as to provide an adequate supply of protein, it being an area where a readily supply is not always available. It is no way to illustrate this government's desire or wish, or any other government's, special status because of their cultural background, or their racial background.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has not been known to let anybody starve. I do not know what administrations were know for that. There might have been a few back in the thirties, but certainly this one has not been known for that nor will not be known for that. There has not been an administration, Mr. Speaker, that have ever governed this Province more alert and more conscious or having a greater desire to reflect the needs of the ordinary people than this one.

So, you know, let us not talk about people starving. It would be suicide for any of us to suggest that we have one law, one regulation, for the Indian population of Labrador, or the Eskimo population of Labrador,

MR. HICKEY: and another one for the rest of the citizens of this Province. Why? On what grounds? What is the justification? How do we explain it to somebody in Bonne Bay, in St. Barbe, or up the Northern Peninsula? How do we explain it just across the Straits, nine miles? You can take eight caribou over there, Sir, but you can only take one over here, if you are lucky, if you manage to get a licence, and then you will pay for it. But in Labrador you do not have to. So let me make it clear -

MR. STRACHAN: May I ask a question?

MR. HICKEY: Yes, go ahead.

MR. STRACHAN: But you should mention the fact also that the fellow in St. Barbe has the choice of going to the market and buying meat every month of the year. He has potatoes. He has vegetables. He has fresh fruit. He has eggs. You should make the point that these people there, if they did not have that privilege, as you call it, the privilege to hunt and get eight caribou, one per person in the family, not eight per family, one per person. If you have four in the family you get four caribou. In other words there would be no meat, no protein, there would be nothing at all for seven months of the year.

MR. HICKEY: I will not hesitate at all, Mr. Speaker, to acknowledge that. As a matter of fact that is just what I have said in another way. I have described, and I think adequately explained, why this policy is in effect, not to give special status because of racial background but recognizing a need in an area which is difficult in terms of supply, difficult in terms of transportation, or what have you. And I could not agree more with my hon. friend that, you know, until such time that those stable items are on the supermarket shelves or the shelves of the stores, whether they be small or large, in Labrador so should there be special consideration and special status and special regulations to adequately take care of those people. When I mentioned the eight caribou, what I was referring to was a maximum of eight.

MR. HICKEY: But my hon. friend is absolutely right; it is one per person up to eight.

What concerns me, Mr. Speaker, in my dealings, in most recent dealings, with some of the issues in Labrador and some of the people in Labrador, and I am sure that my hon. friend across the way does not in any way acknowledge this kind of attitude, at least to my knowledge of him certainly does not indicate to me that he does, and that is the willful, deliberate disregard for a statute of this Province, for a law of this Province.

Two years ago, Mr. Speaker, or a year and a half ago, a number of my colleagues and I acceded to a request from the Native Association of Labrador to set up an advisory board or an advisory committee - not the Advisory Council now that I talk about that is funded by the Province - but this was an advisory committee so that the native peoples of Labrador would have all the input that was necessary into developing and changing wildlife regulations.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there was some difficulty in getting together for meetings and getting people off the Coast and what have you. There were great difficulties in agreeing on the terms of reference of that committee, and finally we got off the ground and had one meeting. My staff went to Happy Valley, I think it was. And even then we went, my staff went, with the knowledge that at least word had come back from two members of the Native Association that they intended to burn the Wild Life Act. There was one meeting, and Mr. Speaker, I made it clear to one of those people that we will not negotiate with you Wild Life Regulations or any other regulations, or any other issue, nor will we talk to you under the threat, under any threat, under the suggestion of disregard for the law, what could be

MR. HICKEY: considered a kind of blackmail. But I made it very clear, "We are not going to do business that way. If you are not prepared to sit down and rationally debate and discuss those issues which you find unacceptable, and our willingness to try to achieve some compromise position, if you are not prepared to do that then there is no point of any discussion. Indeed there is nothing to discuss!" About one week, Mr. Speaker, before we were due to have another meeting, I was informed that some caribou had been taken by the natives, or one or two, I am not sure. I was told that my wildlife staff, I was told this by a gentleman, a native of Labrador, that he had informed the wildlife people he was going to take twenty caribou and he said, "Minister I wish to inform you now that we did not take twenty, we took only nine." And I was also told that my staff acted hastily in going to search for that caribou meat by bringing in the Mounties. But the gentleman neglected to tell me all of the story. He neglected to tell me that when my wildlife staff went to investigate upon receiving a complaint, that some twenty or thirty people meleed around that first house they went to, and I do not imagine they were wishing that gentleman the time of day. In fact, I get the impression that the atmosphere was somewhat cool indeed to that gentleman. So much so that he was prohibited from entering that house.

MR. ROBERTS: The minister's official?

MR. HICKEY: The wildlife officer. The official had no choice but go and get the assistance of the RCMP, and he asked for a number of the RCMP in keeping with, or in relation to the number of natives that had congregated around the dwelling. He went back, of course the meat had been taken out, and those people have contacts in the area. The reason I say today, Mr. Speaker, to give credence to my statements that there is not unrest or there is

MR. HICKEY: not talk of separatism or separating from the Province by any large majority of even the native population, is because a good number of the native people of Labrador are quite prepared and willing to acknowledge and stay within the limits of the law. For how does one think that information on those issues such as taking caribou without a licence, or not within the law, gets to my staff?

There is not agreement among the native people that the law or the Wildlife Act should be broken, nor was there agreement in that particular instance.

I informed that gentleman when he called me again a couple of days later that I would not sit down and discuss with him or anyone else, nor would I allow my staff to go in an atmosphere where, on at least one occasion, it almost reached the point of violence, or certainly violence was suggested. Nor was I prepared to have my staff sit down and attempt to work out a compromise position or improve wherever possible those regulations under any threat. I asked that gentleman, Mr. Speaker, and I ask this same question of hon. members of the House today; whatever the racial background of a citizen of this Province may be—be it Eskimo, be it Indian, be it anything—does any citizen have the right, or should any citizen be aided and abetted to adopt a position which in fact says the good laws and the laws that I like I shall uphold; the law I do not like I shall break? Think about that one, because that is very appropriate to the situation in Labrador, because this is what I am told by some of the native people in Labrador, "We will tear up your Wildlife Act. We will not uphold or will not acknowledge or stay within the boundaries of your Wildlife Act. We want nothing to do with it and we will break it." And then I am asked will I please envoke a regulation which empowers me to give special status to certain people in Labrador. My answer to that gentlemen was very simply, very quick and concise, "No, I will not."

MR. HICKEY: I will not perpetrate on the rest of the citizens of this Province any discriminatory policy which says, "Because you live in Labrador, because you happen to be of an Indian background or an Eskimo background you may break any law you wish and I will see to it that you are absolved from going to the courts." I say, Mr. Speaker, the day that any minister, myself included, fails in his duty, whatever the ultimate results might be, fails in his duty to treat fairly and squarely the citizens of this Province that is the time that that minister should be out of office. That is why that gentleman was given that decision.

So you see, Sir, when we talk of the question of separatism for Labrador I say as I said in the beginning of my comments, we should not be blinded by the facts and the facts are that one group wants services similar to those people on the Island part of the Province, which we say they should have, which we say they will get as quick as we can deliver it to them, and the other group, a goodly number or a reasonably good percentage want the same thing and I say we should see to it that everything possible is done to achieve their goals and their desires.

My friend illustrated reasons for special consideration given to special people in Labrador and I say that should continue and should be increased and broadened if necessary for the peoples of Labrador have a right, have a right to the same kind of food as anybody else in this Province, be it on the Island or anywhere else. And so we should not turn our backs on that. We should not lose sight of the fact that Labrador is a special area with special problems and with a special kind of geography. But we should not, Mr. Speaker, we should never allow ourselves to be clouded, to have the issue clouded to the extent where because of those areas of uniqueness, be it geography or weather conditions or what have you, be it racial or the racial background of those people or any other reason, we should never let the issue, the main issue be clouded

MR. HICKEY: by those other considerations to the extent where we give special status to special groups in Labrador purely and simply because of their racial background.

The people of Labrador stand equal in my view, Mr. Speaker, one and all stand equal be it Indian, Eskimo or settler. And I would like to hear hon. gentlemen in this House state very clearly what their view is on that, let us not run with the hare and hunt with the hound. And if we do not state our views, Mr. Speaker, very clearly on that we are fanning the fires of separatism. And those who do not take that kind of position will have their mark in history, instead of attempting to solve the problem of separatism, which I am sure is what prompts my hon. friend into bringing the issue before this House, will have their mark in history as having contributed something to it and not addressing themselves to the question by way of solution.

No, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, while I have a very warm spot in my heart for the issues and people of Labrador, and find myself deeply concerned as any responsible citizen for the issues of Labrador, I cannot find myself supporting the establishing of a select committee, because I think, I honestly believe it would be a step backwards. I think, indeed, we would be, as I have said, open to criticism. We would be opening the door for people to criticize us by simply saying, "Oh there is another committee who are going to do some more study, who are going to visit Labrador, the various sections of Labrador and talk to all those people again." I would be awfully

MR. HICKEY:

surprised if the media and if the printed media who certainly do not hesitate to pass opinions on issues very quickly after they are raised in this hon. House, I would be awfully surprised, indeed I would be amazed if this House approved the setting up of a select committee, if you did not see editorials in the paper which would simply say, "Another committee. They are going to study it again. They are going to put a Band-Aid on a problem when really a cure is required." I would be awfully surprised if that did not happen. And while I do not always agree with editorials - I happen to be in a portfolio in which I find it impossible to agree always with editorials. I would love to because I have a lot of friends in the media such as Mr. Collins and a few others, I would certainly have to agree if in fact we were to approve this resolution, set up this committee, and if such an editorial appeared in the paper I would simply have to acknowledge it and say, "He is right." While I may not be able to say it publicly, you know, if we were crazy enough to jump in and bite the bit and set up this, then certainly I think we would reap what we would sow. We would deserve that kind of commentary.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will be opposing this resolution. It is too bad because I would have liked to have seen a resolution which I could support as I said. I think that the issues of Labrador are big. I think they are very challenging and I think that moves such as, setting up a committee, such as putting the name Labrador onto the Province of Newfoundland or putting it on the stationery or anything of that nature, that is not going to wash. The people have had enough of that. They want some action. They want some results and they are getting it from this administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, I offer very sincere congratulations to the hon. member for the Coast of Labrador and the hon. member for the Central part of Labrador on the perfectly splendid speeches they made in this House on this resolution. I congratulate the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) for the thoughtful and non-partisan

MR. SMALLWOOD:

remarks of his speech and I congratulate the Minister of Tourism - I do not know just what it is I congratulate him on but I congratulate him anyhow because frankly I disagree with most of what he said.

When he says that Newfoundland's law is to be enforced in Labrador without fear, favour or affection regardless of race, regardless of history, regardless of anything, everyone was to be treated exactly and precisely alike, he was expressing a view that is rapidly disappearing across this nation of Canada. He was flying in the face of a sentiment that is rising in Canada and becoming very strong. That is to say that the special case of the native peoples all across the nation, across the Northern half of this continent including Labrador, the special case of the native people must, I say, must an increasing number of statesmen in Canada say, must receive special care, special attention. This has got

MR. SMALLWOOD: to be the case, because the danger is not in Quebec alone. There are other parts of Canada and other peoples in Canada who are unhappy, who are discontented, who are dissatisfied and surely it is the part of statesmanship to satisfy them as far as it can reasonably be done.

Now in the case of Labrador I cannot overlook the fact that the Indians, the Indian people have been there continuously, not continually but actually continuously for at least 9,000 years. At least 9,000 years, how much longer we do not know. In the course of time the archaeologists and the anthropologists and other scientists at our university, and at other universities will probably uncover evidence pushing the history of the Indians in Labrador much back behind 9,000 years. It was only this past Summer that a professor at Memorial University discovered and uncovered what is now regarded as the oldest burial mound in North America, North, Central or South America, 9,000 years old. This past Summer that was found. This pushes the existence of the Indians in Labrador back at least 9,000 years and there is unmistakable evidence that the Inuit people, usually called Eskimos, have been in Labrador for at least 5,000 years.

Now we, we and our forefathers, the oldest of us, the Dawes of Conception Bay and the Garlands and the Davises, and the other oldest of all Newfoundland families have been on this Island a maximum of a little over 400 years, not 4,000, but 400. We came here the day before yesterday. The Indians and the Inuit people in Labrador have been there thousands upon thousands of years, and they have never ceased to be there. And I, if I were Minister of Tourism, talking to this resolution, I might indeed, if it was party decision, caucus decision, to vote against the caucus, the resolution, say that I was going to vote against it as he has done but I think I would have been a little kinder, a little

MR. SMALLWOOD: more gracious in my references to the native people of Labrador.

They are there, there is no doubt of that. They are there all right. They are human. They can speak. They can be discontented. They can express their discontent and that discontent can grow. It has been growing. It continues to grow.

MR. RIDEOUT: It is a good thing there is only a small number of them. That is the only thing that saves them.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Now I am not happy at all about the state of public opinion in Labrador. It seems to me, and this what I am about to say is said only after a lot of careful and I believe mature thought on my part, that there are three great problems facing Newfoundlanders today; One and foremost is the financial condition of this Province, which I believe is precarious in the extreme. The second is the economic situation of this Province which again is serious but not so serious as the financial.

I cannot help remembering every time

MR. SMALLWOOD:

we hear of the appalling degree and percentage of unemployment in our Province today, I cannot help remembering that it could be a lot worse. I cannot forget that throughout most of my life since I have been on this earth, for the greater part of those seventy-five years, the average percentage of unemployment in Newfoundland in January, February, March and April would be say, between fifty and sixty per cent. I can just barely remember when unemployment averaged about seventy per cent in the Winter in Newfoundland. And though it is an appalling thing that in a Province of Canada, that in a part of the new world that is part of this beautiful Canadian nation we should have 30,000 or 40,000 unemployed men and women. That is an appalling thought. I cannot forget that something around \$200 million, \$250 million is poured in here from the UIC, the National Employment Commission or whatever is the correct name.

MR. NEARY: Unemployment Insurance Commission.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Unemployment Insurance Commission at Ottawa. And I cannot neglect the fact, I cannot just blot it out of my mind that thousands of those unemployed people, because of the rates of pay in Newfoundland for so many people, thousands of them are getting just about as much in unemployment insurance as they would be getting if they had jobs, at the particular kinds of jobs they would have normally, if they had jobs. Nevertheless when all that is said, the fact remains that the economic condition of our Province today is very serious.

Then thirdly, the Labrador people's discontent, their dissatisfaction, their discouragement, their unhappiness, that is problem number three in this Province today. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have placed that problem very high in the catalogue. Number one, the financial condition of the Province; number two, the economic condition of the Province; and number three, the deepening dissatisfaction of the people of Labrador, not native peoples alone, not Inuit and Indian people alone, but thousands of others as well, some of them being natives of Quebec or of Nova Scotia or of New Brunswick or of the Azores or of Portugal, and a great many of

MR. SMALLWOOD:

them natives of the Island of Newfoundland and a good many of them natives of other parts of Labrador who have gone into the industrial centers.

Now I agree with the minister who just sat down, that there is not a powerful or violent movement for separation in Labrador. I agree. I do not think there is. I think there is some. I do not think it is extreme. I do not think it is powerful. I do not think it is violent, but it is there. There is a suggestion of separating from Newfoundland. There are other suggestions. There is, for example, the suggestion of setting up a regional government for Labrador. There is even the crazy suggestion that Labrador should become a Province, with all of its 35,000 or 40,000 souls, should become a Province. Then the little baby province of Prince Edward Island would seem like a giant.

MR. SMALLWOOD: There is a lake in Labrador which I had the honour of having named after me, a lake, one of many lakes, one of many hundreds of lakes in Labrador. There is one of them that is larger than the whole Province of Prince Edward Island.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is man made though.

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is man made, no it is God made but man did a little damming, built a few walls and things to keep it from escaping.

Prince Edward Island has a population of what is it now - 110,000? Something of the order of 109,000. I remember when it was 95,000. I remember when it was falling steadily. It fell from a little over 100,000, 101,000 down to 98,000, down finally to 95,000. But it has been coming back and I believe now it is something of the order of 110,000 souls.

MR. NEARY: A good many are federal civil servants.

MR. SMALLWOOD: A good many of them are federal civil servants. That is the complete truth. And a good many of them are people from different parts of Canada and the United States who have gone in there, bought land for country homes and retirement places to live out the remainder of their days. A few Newfoundlanders have done that. The late Phil Grouchy, Vice-President and General Manager of the great paper mill company of Grand Falls, lived out his remaining days in Prince Edward Island.

Talk of Labrador becoming a Province. Mr. Speaker, I was in London in December and I went to the House of Commons and sat in listening to the debates on devolution. For many years, as the hon. member for the Coast of Labrador - what is the Coast?

MR. NOLAN: Eagle River.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Eagle River so well knows, he being a native Scot,

MR. SMALLWOOD: for many years in Scotland there has been discontent among many people over the fact that they were subject to the Parliament of the United Kingdom, discontent with being part of the United Kingdom. So a nationalistic movement sprang up and has grown and grown and it began running candidates in elections for Parliament at London, at Westminster, and they finally got one or two elected, then three or four, then five or six or eight or ten, and today in the Parliament at Westminster, I think, there are some twelve or fifteen Scottish Nationalists, M.P.s, elected on that ticket. Not as Tories, not as Liberals, not as Labourites but as Scottish National Party, SNT. And they have kept up a clamour for a great many years in Scotland for a separate government, a sort of separatist movement to have a government and a parliament of their own.

Now it is perfectly true that the government of the United Kingdom had a Secretary of State for Scotland and they had an Under Secretary of State for Scotland and many of the ministries in the British Government had Scottish branches and had offices in Scotland and the Parliament and the Government of the United Kingdom went a long way to satisfy the nationalistic aspirations of Scotland.

MR. ROBERTS: Scotland had their own law. It always had their own law.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is right. And so this movement grew and grew and resulted in legislation being brought in to the House of Commons, and I was there and heard the debate on it. I was there the night it passed. The parties split on it. The Labour Party, the Government Party split. Some of them voted against it and some voted for it. The Tory Party split, some for, some against. The Liberal Party, I think there are only twelve or thirteen of them anyhow in the House of Commons, I do not think there are quite as many Liberals in the House of Commons at Westminster today

MR. SMALLWOOD: as there are Scottish Nationalists. It is incredible but it is true. I think they were more or less unanimous, and the devolution bill just scraped through. Now what is that bill?

Scotland, Mr. Speaker, is a nation of about 7 million people. Roughly speaking about the population of Ontario. But unlike Ontario, Scotland is a nation. It has always been a nation. How long has it

MR. SMALLWOOD: been a nation? How long has it been a nation a thousand years?

MR. J. CARTER: Longer.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Longer than a thousand years. It had its own Royal Family, it had its own Kings, it had its own parliament, it had its own laws, it was a nation. It had its own armies. Again and again it invaded England with its army and the battles were fought and these are commemorated in song, this Scottish nation.

Wales also had its nationalistic movement, a lot of unhappiness among the people of Wales, a lot of discontent and a growing nationalistic feeling with this result: In December Parliament, the House of Commons, then followed by the House of Lords, with the Queen signing, giving the Royal Assent, Parliament has now passed a law applying to Scotland and to Wales. Now what is that law? Does it say that the United Kingdom is dissolved, the United Kingdom being the nation of England, the nation of Scotland and the nation of Wales, those three nations having united to become the united nation which is the formal name today, does it mean under this devolution law that they are now dissolving and becoming once again three separate nations? It does not. The very preamble to the bill, if I had remembered I would have brought it here, says that what this bill is to do for Scotland and for Wales in no way is to separate the three nations. What is to be done for Scotland and what is to be done for Wales is to be done within the gambit of the constitution of the United Nations and done within the limit of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

DR. FARRELL: May I ask a question, Sir?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, of course.

DR. FARRELL: The Scottish Nationalists are not very happy with that position at the moment are they?

MR. SMALLWOOD: I think that the Scottish Nationalists, the Scottish Nationalist M.P's who voted unanimously for it regard

MR. SMALLWOOD: it as a great step forward, a very great step forward.

MR. ROBERTS: It is the Labour M.P's who are embittered, the Labour M.P's from Scotland.

MR. SMALLWOOD: What was happening in Scotland was that that great stronghold of the Labour Party which was sending men religiously - and almost that is the proper word because it was done with great fervour, great emotion - they were sending M.P's, Labour M.P's to Westminster from all parts of Scotland, nearly all parts. In late years, in several elections past the Labour vote was going down and the Scottish Nationalist vote was coming up and the Labour Party, fearful of what the net result would be if it went on for another ten or twenty years say, might end up by having no Labour M.P's from Scotland but all the M.P's from Scotland being Scottish Nationalists. So, to head that off, the Labour Government set up a royal commission, there was a white paper - any hon. member who would like to see it, I have it - there was a grey paper - anyone who wants to see that I have that and I have the legislation. The legislation was the culmination of these white papers, these studies that were made.

Now, Scotland will still send M.P's to the House of Commons, Wales will still elect M.P's to the House of Commons, but each of them, each of them will have its own Parliament and each of them will have its own government and the government of each will spend its own money. But where will they get the money? From the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Each year in Parliament the budget will be brought down as usual and it will contain an amount to be voted to the Parliament of Scotland and an amount to be voted to the Parliament of Wales. But these Parliaments, if you can put so grandiloquent a term on them, are not allowed to pass any law that is contradictory of the law of the United Kingdom, because Scotland remains part of the United Kingdom and so does Wales.

MR. NEARY: Do they not do the same thing in Northern Ireland?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Northern Ireland had, has not got now, but had its own Parliament and elected members of Parliament to Westminster. I do not know, with regard to Northern Ireland, whether the Parliament of the United Kingdom voted money to the Parliament of Northern Ireland. I do not know whether they did or not.

AN HON. MEMBER: They did, yes.

MR. SMALLWOOD: They did. Well,

MR. SMALLWOOD:

I did not know that. I have never made much of a study of Northern Ireland. And if Northern Ireland had been in this devolution bill I would have listened with great interest to the debate that went on. Please, please let us hear no more of this silly idea of Labrador with its 30,000 or 40,000 people - what is it, 45,000 now?

AN HON. MEMBER: Forty thousand.

MR. SMALLWOOD: -something of the order of 40,000 or 45,000 souls and probably 112,000 square miles becoming a province, that is too foolish for words. It is too silly for serious minded, grown-up, mature men to talk about. Let us put an end to that.

But, what do you do? What is the solution? What is going to prevent a rapid increase in the amount of dissatisfaction, of discontent, of unhappiness? Surely this, that and the other idea will be mooted in Labrador. Surely all kinds of suggestions will be generated, all kinds of proposals will be made. Many of them will be silly and foolish. But many a silly idea, many a foolish idea has caught on and people lacking the facts, lacking the information, fall for foolish ideas. So some foolish idea in Labrador can take root, it can become popular and it can get to be accepted by large numbers, at least large proportions of the population of Labrador. Now to allow that to happen is stupid. It would be stupid of this House. It would be stupid of the government of this Province, stupid of the Opposition, stupid of every MHA to be content to let her ride, to do what the minister did there, what I am often tempted to do. The minister was powerfully tempted there in his speech to refer to the things, the good things, that the present administration have done for Labrador. I am not arguing that they have not done good things for Labrador. But if he is going to talk about the good things that the present administration did for Labrador, I could mention some forty or fifty good things that the previous administration did.

But the net result of it all is after whatever good things were done by my administration and whatever good things have been done by the present Premier's administration, after it all, the net result is

MR. SMALLWOOD:

discontent, dissatisfaction, unhappiness. So much for the good that has been done.

Now let me try to expose and perhaps explode a silly idea. I have heard people in Corner Brook argue publicly at a meeting, because of the great industrial structure there was in Corner Brook and in the Humber Valley that money ought not just be scooped up by the government in St. John's and spent generally around the Province. The money that is generated, the tax revenue generated in Corner Brook ought to be spent in Corner Brook. I got myself in serious trouble when in reply to that at a banquet or some speech I made in Corner Brook I said, "This is the theory of feeding the fat sow." The hon. minister will remember the trouble I got in. It was true but it was indiscreet of me as a politician to say it because it seemed as though I were comparing Corner Brook to a sow and all kinds of wrong - I could have put the same thought in other words.

MR. NEARY: We used to say the same thing over on Bell Island once upon a time.

MR. SMALLWOOD: On Bell Island they would talk, years ago, when it was a great industrial center, of all the revenue they were generating. Incidentally they did not generate it for the Newfoundland Government. The Newfoundland Government, except for income tax when there was income tax and for customs duties when there were customs duties coming to the Newfoundland Government, the Newfoundland Government got virtually nothing from the big enterprise.

MR. NEARY: Ten thousand dollars a year.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Ten thousand dollars a year. That great company, mining a million, 1.5 million, a million and three quarter tons of iron ore a year paying \$10,000 to the Newfoundland Government.

However the same thing in Grand Falls. They have a magnificent industry there, a great modern paper mill, the first we had in this Province. And you would hear talk in Central Newfoundland along the same line. We are

MR. SMALLWOOD: generating the revenue and St. John's gets it and the government gets it, and they spend it where they like. Let them spend it here where it originates.

Now look at that argument for a moment, just look at it. Look at it nationally, . You have ten provinces. You have three provinces that are very rich, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. What have you got? I argued on TV with Wacky Bennett when he was Premier of that province and I was Premier of this one, and on TV we had a debate, and he wanted the Government, the Legislature of British Columbia to have the right to put on any kind of taxes they liked, and they should have the preference over Parliament.

I said, "What are you suggesting that you pull out of the Union? What you want is the advantages of Confederation and none of the disadvantages. You do not want to pay a federal income tax. You do not want to pay in British Columbia. You do not want to pay federal customs duties. What do you want to pay Ottawa?" "Well we do not want to pay anything?" "Well what do you want to get from Ottawa? You want everything that Ottawa gives you but you do not want to contribute."

Now the whole argument is, of course, the heart of Confederation. Without it there is no Confederation. It is a farce. It is a humbug if you do not have this idea of equalization, that the sovereign power of the State of Canada, in other words the Parliament of Canada, shall be used by law to collect money from the haves, Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and pass it over to the have-nots, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, at least those six and probably Saskatchewan, and to a large extent Quebec because Quebec, too, was a have-not Province.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Who can argue against that? But if that is a sound principle that the sovereign power of the Parliament of Canada should be used to collect revenue from the richer provinces and spend it in all kinds of ways in the poorer provinces to bring about some degree of equalization of prosperity, some degree of equalization of opportunity, some degree of equalization of public services, infrastructure, if that is right, is it not equally right that the Government of this Province, headquartered in this very building, should collect revenue from Corner Brook and from Grand Falls and from Buchans and from the Burin Peninsula, which is perhaps the most prosperous part of our Province today, and spend it, if I may use the term to sum up a whole - no I will not use it - scratch something tickle, the House knows what I mean? Is it not the plain duty of the government to collect from the haves, the prosperous parts of the Province, and spend it in the less prosperous parts by way of roads, water and sewer systems, schools, hospitals, clinics, all kinds of public services? Is that not the name of the game?

Now let us carry that same principle to Labrador, and if it is sound in Newfoundland, it is sound in Labrador, and if it is sound in Alberta and Canada generally, it is sound in Newfoundland. It is a sound principle, that you do not collect whatever revenue you do collect in Labrador City. You do not collect the revenue that is generated in the City of Wabush. You do not collect the revenue that is generated in any other productive areas of Labrador and spend it in those areas, anymore than the Government of Canada should collect money from Alberta and spend it in Alberta, collect it from British Columbia, spend it there, collect it from Ontario and spend it in Ontario.

So I reject for the benefit of my hon. friend across the way and up here to my left, I reject the idea. It is silly. It is foolish that the government should spend in

MR. SMALLWOOD: Labrador all the revenue it collects from Labrador. That is foolish. It is not foolish however to say that the government and to believe that the government should be extremely generous in its spending in Labrador, to try to make up for the day, for the long days, the long years, the centuries of neglect of Labrador, the people of Labrador, by Newfoundland.

Remember, Mr. Speaker, it is only the other day when Labrador consisted of a few Inuit people down on the coast, a few Indian people in back a little from the coast, a few people who were a mixture of both and a few descendants

MR. SMALLWOOD:

of a scattering of European families. The whole population of Labrador was out on the coast and numbered maybe a couple or 3,000, the whole of Labrador. And the population every Summer jumped, quadrupled, quintupled or whatever it is, doubled. You know, there were 10,000 Newfoundland fishermen who went down to Labrador every Summer, schooners and schooners all around Bonavista Bay, all around Trinity Bay, all around Conception Bay and some schooners, hon. members may be surprised to hear, from the Burin Peninsula. They went down fishing on the Coast of Labrador. Ten thousand Newfoundland fishermen every Summer in Labrador, doubling and tripling and quadrupling the population of Labrador if only for a few months of the year.

MR. NEARY: My mother used to go down there.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Many a woman went down as cook aboard the schooners. A schooner of three or four or five men would bring along one woman to cook for the fishermen.

Now today - and it is only yesterday it happened, Mr. Speaker. I myself turned the first sod for just about everything down there, Labrador City, the city of Wabush, Churchill Falls. And I am not all that old. The calendar may say so but that is all that does. That is only the other day that these industries came into existence and in so doing created an entirely new world in Labrador. So that today you have two Labradors. You have the ancient peoples out on the coast. My hon. friend for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) is himself the member for the constituency, living in a settlement of eighty per cent Inuit people. You have that world, the people out on the coast.

Then you have the world of Western Labrador, that magnificent modern city of Labrador City and that other magnificent place, city of Wabush, two great industrial centers, magnificent homes, magnificent streets, magnificent paving, water and sewerage, electricity, electric heat, magnificent recreational facilities, towns that would do credit

MR. SMALLWOOD:

to any part of Canada, would do credit to British Columbia, do credit to Ontario, magnificent towns, and people there from many parts of the world, two Labradors, as different as chalk is from cheese. But they are all in Labrador and they are all discontented.

My own personal theory about Labrador City and city of Wabush is this, that if the streets were paved with gold the people there would be unhappy. I will tell you why. I believe that a great many of them believe they should all be given medals for living there, that they are heroes for living there in that climate. There are people who live in much worse climates, much colder climates, much harsher climates than the climate of Western Labrador. But they feel that they are remarkable people. And this darn government up there in St. John's and this darn House of Assembly ignoring them.

So you have these two Labradors. What are you going to do about it? The Premier has no intention - he is too smart an hon. gentleman, he is too smart a politician, too good a Newfoundlander - he has no intention surely to God of allowing this discontent to deepen, this dissatisfaction to broaden and widen, this unhappiness to be extended to the point where there is no answer to it, you know, go past the point of no return. He does not intend that, notwithstanding what his minister - I wish the Premier had been here to hear the very negative type of speech delivered by his minister, the Minister of Tourism who made a very good speech but terribly negative, no suggestions, just more of the same. A little sparingly he referred to the good things the government are doing, and he even gave a little praise to a former administration, the good things that have been done for Labrador.

MR. SMALLWOOD:

My eye! When it is all said and done everything that has been done, the net result of it is a growing discontent. So that is not the answer obviously. More? I do not think that is the answer either. Spend twice as much as is being spent in Labrador by the Newfoundland Government and by the Canadian Government, twice as much and you will still have discontent and this discontent will grow, it will broaden, it will extend and it will get stronger. Now there has got to be an answer to that.

My hon. friend for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) has brought in a motion here suggesting that this House set up a select committee of its own members, five or six or eight - is there a number given in the - no - some number that the House would determine, a number of MHAs, included in which surely there would be some ministers, who would go down to Labrador. Now the Minister of Tourism said, you know, the editorials in the paper, he can see them now, he does not need to wait, he can see the editorials if this motion were carried and a select committee of this House were appointed to go to Labrador and report back within a certain fixed limit of time. What is the limit? There is a limit set, is there not? Is there not a fixed -

AN HON. MEMBER: Not in the motion.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Not in the motion. Well there ought to be and there could be because it is certainly not intended to be a sort of a leisurely thing going on for a year or two. He suggested that if -

MR. SIMMONS: We suggested that the work be completed during this session.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is suggested but that is not in the resolution, but it could be put in the resolution. He suggested that if this were done he can see the editorials in the newspapers now without waiting. They would say, "Oh, another committee." Well he is probably right. And that kind of editorial would be as superficial and silly as many an editorial is, stupid and foolish, lacking in depth, lacking in perception, lacking in knowledge. There is many an editorial like that written in ignorance. Not all but many a one, and that would be such

MR. SMALLWOOD:

a one if it were written. But so what? Are we afraid of an occasional editorial in the newspaper? If we are to do the right thing, let us do the right thing regardless of what somebody will write about it.

I do not think that a committee of this House, going down to Labrador, going to Nain, going to Cartwright, going to half a dozen or a dozen places in Labrador, members of the House - I do not think it has ever been done, has it? Has the House of Assembly ever sent a delegation of its own membership down to Labrador?

MR. SIMONS: Never.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The thing could be built up. It could be built up as an honest and a sincere attempt on all sides of the House, not party, not partisan, not government but the whole House had unanimous - and I believe that even the Minister of Tourism is good hearted enough to be persuaded. I believe a little persuasion could be used and make it unanimous, that the House of Assembly unanimously, so concerned as it is with the unhappiness of the Labrador people, sends a delegation of its own members down there to sit and listen and let them state their case.

Now between you and me, Mr. Speaker, I would not look for solutions from the people who would come casually before that select committee. I do not think there is anyone down there at the moment who has the solution. I do not believe the solution - there must be a solution - I do not think that solution presently is known. The solution has got to originate in the statesmen of Newfoundland. Have we not got statesmen? Are there no statesmen here? There are fifty of us, fifty elected members of this legislature. Is there no statesmanship amongst us? Can we not rise to the occasion? Sure we can.

So as there is nothing partisan about it, you could not expect me to introduce or the Premier, it had to be introduced by a member of Labrador. Only two Labrador members have spoken, the member for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) and the member for Central Labrador - I always forget the name.

MR. SIMMONS: Naskaupi.

MR. SMALLWOOD: - Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie). They have spoken with great sincerity. How could they do otherwise. They live down there. That is their home, their people are down there, their friends are down there. How could they do but speak with great sincerity. Let us make it non-partisan. Let us make it a unanimous decision of this House and the word will go around Labrador, "At last thanks be to God, at last the House of Assembly have become really aware. They are really concerned now about the state of public opinion in Labrador, and they are sending down a batch of their members so we can get at them and talk to them."

In the meantime let the statesmanship in the Cabinet and in the caucus and the caucus over here, let the statesmanship of this House working separately, then finally coming together, let them come up with what might be the answer. And the answer is not regional government. The answer is not a new and a separate province. No nonsense like that. But there is a solution. I am sure of that. I am very confident

MR. SMALLWOOD: of it, and so whatever happens I am going to vote for the motion. I do hope the Premier will because if the Premier does I am sure his friends will back him up in this. I have not seen them fail yet to back him in anything that he has done in this House. I do not know what happens in Cabinet. There have been times in Cabinet when I failed and I am sure that he has failed to get completely unanimous support from the Cabinet but in the House here if he will vote for this and say to the people of Labrador, Yes, I, Frank D. Moores, Premier of this Province am convinced that the situation of public opinion in Labrador is serious, I am convinced of it. I am not sure that we have the answer yet but we are going to try to find it and we are going to send a delegation down from this very House of Assembly to report back not later than a certain time. There could be a time limit, three months, four months, five months. That is not too long. The people of Labrador waited, some of them, for 9,000 years, the Indians, 5,000 years the Inuit, the Whites have waited now for dozens and dozens of years, so they would not mind, I think, waiting for another few months. I am going to vote for the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I move the adjournment of the debate.

On motion debate adjourned.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the House wish to call it 6:00 p.m.?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It being 6:00 p.m. I leave the Chair and adjourn the House until tomorrow Thursday, February 17, 1977 at 3:00 p.m.