

PRELIMINARY

UNEDITED

TRANSCRIPT

House of Assembly

For the period:

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

February 18, 1977

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs and the Environment.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if this is the appropriate time but I would like to bring to the attention of the hon. House the appointment of a very distinguished citizen of St. John's, a very personal friend of mine, a former member of the House, a former councillor, to a very important post as Judge of the Citizenship Court. I think it is the first time that one has been appointed in Newfoundland. I do not know what the procedure is, Sir, whether I should move congratulations. I feel that the appointment of Jeff Carnell should be recognized by the members of this House because of his service as a community-minded citizen of the City of St. John's, and a great Newfoundlander. I would like to place on the record of the House our congratulations on his appointment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, those of us on this side of the House, whether in the Chamber at present or not, would certainly wish to be associated with the sentiments expressed by the Minister of Consumer Affairs, the gentleman from St. John's Centre.

Mr. Carnell, I am not sure whether he is Judge Carnell in the sense, but Mr. Carnell the Judge of the Citizenship Court, is a distinguished citizen of this city and a long time friend and, I may add, neighbour of mine. We lived next door to each other for a number of years on a street here in St. John's.

AN HON. MEMBER: Allan Square?

MR. ROBERTS: Well, no, both of us had come a little

MR. ROBERTS: distance from Allan Square, I say to the hon. gentleman, It was a street called Pringle Place, named after, I believe, the Colonel in the Royal Engineers who participated in the last duel held in Newfoundland. The gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) could probably enlighten us on that point.

But Mr. Carnell, Mr. Speaker, is a distinguished citizen of this city. He has served the public in a number of capacities; as a member of this House for four years, representing the old district of St. John's North, as a member of the City Council, I believe for four consecutive terms totalling sixteen years, and carrying on a tradition which had been established by his father, the late Mayor Andrew G. Carnell, and Mr. Carnell in private life. and community life has distinguished himself in a number of ways. I think it is an admirable appointment and I think he will add distinction to a new office; it is the first time we have had a citizenship Judge in this Province. I gather it is a reflection of the new procedures which are set forth in the new Citizenship Act which comes into effect - or it came into effect, I should say, a few days ago, I believe on the anniversary of the proclamation of the present Canadian Flag, the fifteenth day of February.

It is a little sad in a way, I guess, the new Act is in because, Sir, we are no longer British Subjects as Canadian citizens; we are now citizens of the Commonwealth and not automatically British subjects and that is another of the effects of the Act.

But, Sir, we certainly join in the congratulations to Mr. Carnell. We wish him well in his new duties. We know he will discharge them efficiently and with distinction.

Mr. Speaker, while I am here perhaps I may say a word, I know I speak for all members of the House, a word of congratulations to the Premier who is today

MR. ROBERTS: celebrating his own birthday, his own anniversary, his birthday anniversary. We wish him many more years of health and happiness, Sir, in whatever capacity he is called to be in in private or public life. We wish him Happy Birthday, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring the hon. House up to date on the situation as it now exists at the Waterford Hospital. We are all aware, Sir, that late last night the union informed the hospital administration that starting at the 12 o'clock shift the union would be taking advantage of their legal right to strike due to the breakdown in negotiations between NAPE and the Waterford Hospital board and the Treasury Board. It had been anticipated for some time, because the union had given legal notice that the possibility of a strike existed at the hospital today, and therefore there had been an emergency and contingency plan into effect which will allow the hospital management to carry on in a strike situation.

I should point out, Sir, that there are 500 employees in the NAPE bargaining unit out of a total of 680 employees at the hospital. The nurses, the lab and X-ray personnel are not included in this bargaining unit and of course neither is the management. All of these other personnel not in the NAPE unit are expected to report to work as normal, and though it appears not to be so in the case of the nurses, the hospital administration is taking the necessary action to insure that they can return to work. The hospital has stopped admitting new patients, and those patients that can be discharged are being discharged, either to their homes or to other institutions.

Prior to the strike threat there were approximately 400 patients in the hospital, and of this number about thirty now have been discharged bringing the patients numbers down to about 370. The management at the hospital have been briefed and they are prepared to carry on essential services at the hospital, contingency plans have also been prepared to maintain security on all the maximum security wards. It is because of the existence of these wards that government has taken the action of requesting the presence of the Newfoundland Constabulary at the hospital to maintain public safety. The Constabulary, in discharging their responsibility of being the protector of public safety, have of course agreed to enter the institution, and to insure that those people who are working in

MR. DOODY:

the institution and also the patients in the institution are protected from any potential dangers which could arise under the circumstances. It is appalling to me, Sir, personally, and I know to all the members of this hon. House, that the general manager of NAPE, Mr. Locking, has publically branded the members of the Newfoundland Constabulary as strike breakers in this situation. He has accused them of doing the work of the regular employees of the hospital and of breaking union solidarity by crossing the pickets lines to do so, This charge cannot be allowed to be made without an absolute and direct contradiction from government, and without government expressing its complete support and faith in the Newfoundland Constabulary for carrying out what is their duty in a very, very, difficult situation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DOODY: Mr. Locking, or any other person in this province, can expect to be branded as a sensationalist and as a distorter of the true facts. If he suggests that the setting up of a picketline means that anybody who then crosses it will not be subject to police protection in a critical situation. I recognize that this is a very difficult strike, and I recognize that the situation existing at the hospital is far from ideal. I also recognize, Sir, that it takes a great deal of personal fortitude on behalf of the Constabulary members to recognize their overall responsibility to the general public, to the management, to the employees and above all to the patients of the Waterford Hospital and to cross the picket to uphold public safety.

To allow them, Sir, to be criticized for this action, to allow them to be branded as strikebreakers would be a cowardly act by any government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DOODY:

It is my hope that the situation at Waterford will not be clouded by these atrocious accusations by Mr. Locking or any other member of NAPE. It is the responsibility of this government to keep law and order and if as in the case of the Waterford Hospital the strick and a picket line presents some threat to law and order then it is our responsibility through our police force to uphold it. Surely, Sir, no citizen of this province would deny that this is so. I call upon Mr. Locking to withdraw his totally irresponsible remarks about the Newfoundland Constabulary and I call upon this hon. House to give the Constabulary the vote of confidence that they deserve because of their action in this strike.

SOME HON. MEMBERS

Hear, hear!

MR. DOODY: I also call, Mr. Speaker, upon NAPE to return to the bargaining table in an attempt to work out our differences over pensions at the Waterford Hospital, rather than placing the patients of the hospital in a situation of concern, of discomfort, of uncertainty, and indeed, Sir, of danger. Government and the hospital board are willing to sit down at any time with the union with the objective of working out our differences, but we are also, Sir, prepared to accept our responsibilities in negotiating contracts, and to protect the rights of the patients, in this case, where they are placed in a critical situation by the strike of the union, and are in no position, Sir, to protect themselves.

We have a responsibility to the people of this Province, Mr. Speaker, and we must stand firm to see that peace, order and good government prevail, and that the health and the safety of the citizens of this Province take precedence over all other considerations.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, let me say first of all that we on this side of the House agree, of course, with the need to protect - I do not have the exact words of the Minister of Finance - but to protect the interest of the patients at the Waterford Hospital, and we agree that must be the first interest in this instance.

Mr. Speaker, the strike at the Waterford Hospital gives rise to an extraordinarily difficult situation. The Minister of Finance has said that it is a lawful strike, lawful under laws of this Province. The members of the bargaining unit, who happen to belong to NAPE in this case, are exercising rights conferred upon them in fact by an Act of this Legislature.

They are carrying out a lawful strike, and I may add, it is a foreseeable situation. I am not saying this particular strike was foreseen, but, of course, Sir, when we enacted this legislation, indeed I think if one were to check the Hansards one

Mr. Roberts:

would find references to this situation, you know, it is quite foreseeable that we could at some point face what we must now face, a lawful strike at a hospital which by its nature is different even from the other hospitals. That is one side of it, Sir.

The other side, of course, is that the hospital has in its care several hundred patients, I believe the figure is a little under 400, the minister gave us, there are several hundred patients who are, in most cases, unable to care for themselves. That, of course, is the reason why they are receiving the particular and specialized types of treatment which are afforded the patients at the Waterford Hospital.

Sir, it is a very difficult situation, and I think we must above all in this situation be very, very careful, that we do not let our hearts rule our heads, that we do not let emotionalism reign supreme. I had not heard Mr. Locking's statement accusing the members of the Constabulary of being strikebreakers. I think it is certainly an unfortunate and regrettable statement. It adds nothing at all to the efforts to resolve this dispute. Equally, Sir, I do not think the minister's statements add very much to the efforts to resolve and to settle this dispute. The minister may very well feel he has been provoked by the prior statements; he may very well feel that he has to come to the defence of the Constabulary who have no spokesman in this House, other than their employers. I do not doubt he may have both these feelings, and I could certainly understand if he had these feelings.

Mr. Speaker, I am not so sure that the minister should have given in to them. I am not so sure that getting in a slanging match, no matter how reasonable it is or how laudible it may be in a sense, I am not so sure, Sir, that will help in any way to lower the temperatures to bring about a climate which could lead to negotiations, and thus in turn to a settlement.

Sir, a strike, which is after all a normal part of the

Mr. Roberts:

collective bargaining process that we have in this Province, it may not be the desirable part, but it is a perfectly normal part, Sir, of the collective bargaining process, a strike must be settled and it will be settled. And the only question, Sir, in this strike, as in any strike, is whether it is settled relatively amicably or whether it is settled only after a prolonged and difficult period. And statements, Sir, no matter how justified they may be in the eyes of the maker, statements such as Mr. Locking is reported to have made and as the minister made, in my view do not help at all.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot get into a debate, and so I shall not, although, I think the afternoon would be well used if the government would permit Standing Order 23, or would move one themselves, to allow the subject to be discussed in this House this afternoon. I must say, I do not think I will bother moving one, Sir, because Your Honour, I think, would have to rule it out of order, unless the government choose to call it as a matter of government business, in which case perhaps we could very usefully spent the afternoon on the situation at the Waterford Hospital.

But, Sir, I understand the problem, in part,

MR. ROBERTS: is that the union have asked that the attendants at the hospital, who are in daily contact with the so-called dangerous patients, be given a pension plan status comparable to that afforded to the employees of the penitentiary, the members of the Constabulary and the members of the St. John's Fire Department.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if that is so. I am told it is so, and I certainly do not know the merits of it, although I believe most of those attendants already get a degree of special protection in the sense they get the so-called danger pay—contact pay it is now called. It was danger pay in an earlier, less sophisticated era, Sir, and that may be an argument in favour of recognition of their particular point.

It is also significant, Sir, that when the attendants left on a lawful strike that the Police, with whom they sought to be equated on a pensionable status, had to be called in to take up their work and to protect the interests of the patients and of the public.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to say simply that it is an extraordinarily difficult situation, the first time we have ever faced this particular situation in this Province. We have had hospital strikes, but never one at the Waterford Hospital. I would hope, and my appeal would be this, that both sides, Mr. Locking and NAPE on the one hand, and the minister and his officials on the other, Sir, would moderate their statements and would do what they could to bring about the climate of public opinion and the climate of opinion between the two parties in which negotiations can be carried out. Because, Sir, this strike must be ended. It must be ended as quickly as it can be ended, but it will only be ended, Sir, if both sides come to the bargaining table to negotiate, and they can only

MR. ROBERTS: negotiate, Sir, if there is a satisfactory climate, a climate in which negotiations can be carried forward to success.

So I sympathize with the minister, Sir. I think I understand what leads him to make these statements, but I regret he made them because I do not think they add anything at all. All he is doing, Sir, is playing the same game that apparently the other side is playing, and I do not think, Sir, that would help the public interest or the interest of the patients at Waterford Hospital.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, let me say simply that I would ask the Government House Leader whether he would be prepared to allow a Standing Order (23) at a quarter to four, whenever we hit the regular Orders of the Day, instead of the Throne Speech. I think it might be a very useful afternoon's debate here in the House, Sir. Perhaps we might broaden it to discuss the situation in Western Labrador, the situation with respect to the municipal workers here in St. John's. The situations are not the same, each is unique, but I think, Sir, there is rising public concern about the situation and perhaps this House should reflect it.

I cannot move it, Sir, because I do not think it is in order as a Standing Order (23) procedure, in view of the fact the Address-in-Reply debate will presumably come on. I do think, Sir, it would be an appropriate way for the government to act. They have control over the business, of course. This is a non Private Members Day. If the government would agree to that I think it would be a very useful, a very useful thing indeed, Sir, if the House would put its afternoon to that work, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo.

CAPT. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present a petition on behalf of the voters of Island Harbour in ^{of} deep Bay on Fogo Island.

The petition is signed by 207 petitioners and the prayer of the petition is, "We the undersigned, voters of Island Harbour ^{of} in Deep Bay, in the district of Fogo, hereby petition the Department of Transportation and Communications to have our roads sprayed with calcium this coming season."

Now, Mr. Speaker, in supporting this petition I understand it is the intention of the Department of Highways to upgrade all of the gravel roads on Fogo Island. Hopefully this will be accomplished this year or early next year, after which then the paving equipment will move in and pave all the roads on Fogo Island.

Sir, Fogo Island now is becoming a very important part of our economy. Fogo Island is now becoming a productive area and yet, Sir, the modern facilities are very lacking on Fogo Island.

It is not much that

Capt. Winsor.

the people are asking for. In the interim while they are waiting for pavement, they are requesting the Minister of Transportation, through him the government, to carry out the spraying of calcium to dampen the dust during the dusty period. And I think, Sir, in all fairness to the minister and his department, they are worthy of some praise for introducing this programme. I think it was started perhaps a year or two ago on the gravel roads, and I may add, Mr. Speaker, next to pavement, I do not think there is anything else can take the place of keeping the dust down like calcium. It has proven very worth-while, and it has provided a lot of pleasure to a lot of people driving over those gravel roads, both on the mainland part of Fogo district, and on Fogo Island itself.

So I would ask the minister to be a little sympathetic from a very patient group of people. I support the petition, Mr. Speaker, and ask that it be tabled and referred to the department to which it relates.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further petitions?

ORAL QUESTIONS:

The hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance, Sir. Could the minister confirm or deny a statement that was attributed to him in The Evening Telegram last night that the teachers' pension plan is not a negotiable item?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: You know, to be facetious, I guess, I could say, yes, I can either confirm it or deny it, but that is not my intent, Sir. I did not say that the teachers' pension plan was not a negotiable item. It has been on the table for some time, and they have been negotiating about it for some time. Everybody knows that. It is a matter of common knowledge. If that statement is attributed to me, and correctly, then I apologize for having said it. I do not remember having said it, because it obviously is not correct. The teachers' pension plan has been a

Mr. Doody.

subject of negotiations and discussions and deliberations, debate and concern for quite a number of days.

MR. ROWE: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say, if I could, that these questions are not meant to be political or partisan in anyway whatsoever, because we are facing a serious situation if the 8,000 teachers decide to go on strike. But would the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Education give this House some assurance that they would be willing to meet with the NTA to renegotiate this whole business of the pension plan, because there is no immediate liability against that particular plan at the present time.

MR. DOODY: Get to your question.

MR. ROWE: Well, it is just a little preamble, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The rule does clearly state that the hon. gentleman may put in such information as is necessary to make the question intelligible.

MR. ROWE: What I am asking the minister, Mr. Speaker, is whether - we are on the verge of a teachers' strike - whether to avert that he is willing to sit down with the teachers and set a time frame, set aside a time frame in which they could negotiate this whole business related to the pension plan, because there is no immediacy with respect to a liability against the plan at the present time? There may be ten or fifteen years down the road.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: I was speaking with the President of the NTA at no later, I guess, than 12:30 this afternoon when he informed me that the result of the teachers' vote had come in, and they had voted overwhelmingly to reject government's position, the government school board position on this instance, and I said to Mr. Wheeler then it appears that we are going to have to sit down at it again as quickly as we can and try to find a solution to the impasse in which we now find ourselves. And he agreed that this was a very sensible and reasonable thing to do, and so, as far as I understand, the NTA and

Mr. Doody.

the school boards and Treasury Board will be sitting down and having another go at the whole situation. As for a time frame, I do not think you can conduct negotiations within a time frame. That would not be fair to the people on either side. It has got to be done in an open area. The import of

MR. DOODY: my answer is, yes, Treasury Board has been talking to the NTA, they recognize the problem that is there and they are prepared and willing and anxious to sit down and get at it and try to find a solution.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROWE: Could the minister indicate when Treasury Board and himself will be sitting down with the NTA, and have the NTA agreed to hold off on a strike until after such talks are held?

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

MR. DOODY: That is a difficult one to answer because you are asking me to answer something on behalf of the NTA, which is really not within my power. I have, as I said, indicated to the President of the NTA that we were anxious and willing and all the rest of it, to sit down and discuss with them the problems at issue and to try to find a resolution. He agreed that this was an admirable idea and from that I gather then that there will be no - just as soon as it can be arranged, I suggested to him, that he contact the people at Treasury Board, or we will have Treasury Board contact him within the next day or two days or whenever he felt it convenient, and we would arrange a date to sit down and get at it again. You know, it is as soon as it can possibly be done.

Mr. Wheeler did not indicate to me on the telephone that there is going to be a strike tomorrow or yesterday or last week or next week or so on. He does have a mandate, I understand.

MR. SPEAKER: One supplementary.

MR. ROWE: He does have a mandate, obviously, but the NTA did not give any assurance that they would hold off on a strike until such talks are held? They did not give that indication?

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

MR. DOODY: I did not feel I should insult the intelligence of the gentleman with whom I was talking. When he agreed that it was time to sit down and discuss it further, I assumed then that there would be no strike until such time as they felt that the talks were fruitless or were fruitful. It would have been, I thought, improper and imprudent of me to say to him, "Sir, now having agreed to sit down, can you tell me that you are not going to strike before we sit down?" I know Mr. Wheeler very well, I know that he is an intelligent gentleman and I would not insult his intelligence by presuming that such a thing could happen.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the minister a moment ago in referring to the pension issue said, I believe, the term, 'the government-school board position,' and again I am interpreting that he was referring to the pension, the dispute involving the pension issue. Could he indicate to the House whether the government's position insofar as the pension is concerned is also, in fact, the position of the school boards on that point? The public impression is quite different, and I wonder if he would indicate whether the school boards and the government are together on this particular point at issue?

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

MR. DOODY: No, Mr. Speaker, I could not in all fairness to the school boards undertake to speak on their behalf. They are a very, very reliable and a very articulate group of people. They are quite capable of making their own comments in their own area and in their own way. They have done so in the past and I assume they will do so in the future. They certainly are not expecting me to make comments on their behalf, or to demonstrate what their position is in any particular issue.

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow one further supplementary.

MR. DOODY: It would be presumptuous of me to try.

MR. SIMMONS: First of all, I am glad for the clarification because the minister did say 'government-school board position'. The question now then is, is he really rephrasing what he said earlier in that in effect it is not a joint position, this matter of pension, it is not a joint position insofar as he is aware? I am aware he cannot speak for the boards but neither can he misrepresent the boards on this point, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member interpreted my comments as misrepresenting the school boards position on this thing, then I will have to withdraw or apologize or whatever it is that he wants me to do on behalf of the school boards. I am not going to get involved in a niggledy-piggledy, nitty-gritty on this thing as, you know, we could.

We have been into it at great length, The thing is now going to be, hopefully, gone into again at the bargaining table. I think that that is the place where it should be done. I do not want to get into a confrontation, or get myself involved in a wrangle between the school boards, the spokesman for the NTA or the NTA itself or Treasury Board. I just want to try to find an atmosphere in which a peaceful and reasonable reconciliation of the differences can be found. I do not want to get into any wrangle here in this hon. House on the points.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, this question is to the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. Would the minister inform the House as to any details of an agreement presently being negotiated between Price (Nfld.) and Mr. Ed. Ralph, an

MR. FLIGHT: agreement that would give Mr. Ralph
or his company cutting rights, sole cutting rights, to all
birch and hardwoods on Price (Nfld's) limits?

- MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.
- MR. MAYNARD: No, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any agreement being negotiated between two private companies or individuals.
- MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary.
- MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.
- MR. FLIGHT: Is the Ministry of Forestry a party to these negotiations? Would the minister advise the House as to whether they are a party?
- MR. COLLINS: He said that he did not know anything about it.
- MR. SIMMONS: That is not unusual.
- MR. FLIGHT: That is not unusual. I am talking about his officials.
- MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.
- MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, that has to be the most stupid question that has ever been asked in this House. I just said I was not aware of any negotiations.
- SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!
- MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!
- The hon. gentleman to my right as well, because I think I had intervened, at least, simultaneously, to give myself the benefit of the doubt, of perhaps a split second before the hon. gentleman. Certainly during Question Period a kind of debate is not permitted. Questions are meant to ask for information and answers to give it. And these matters - there is opportunity for debate on the matters arising at other opportunities but not during the Question Period.
- MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.
- MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.
- MR. FLIGHT: Sir, I would point out to the House that I had no intention of that being a stupid question.
- MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!
- MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker.
- I have to have a chance to have a small preamble to indicate that this is serious business, you know, for Central Newfoundland,

Mr. Flight.

and, Mr. Speaker, that there is an agreement being negotiated. Ed Ralph is getting the cutting rights to all hardwoods on Price (Nfld.) Limited, and I am concerned about the rights of the small operators.

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

The hon. gentleman correctly stated at the beginning, when he was recognized, that he needed to put in some - he used the word - preamble, presumably to make the question intelligible. However, he may not debate the previous answer. The material might be necessary in order to make the question understandable, but that is the only kind of information that should be included.

The hon. member.

MR. FLIGHT: Now then, my supplementary to the minister.

If indeed there is an agreement being negotiated, would the minister assure this House that the rights of the small operators, who make a living and who employs people cutting birch on Price (Nfld.) limits, will be protected? Will the minister use his office and his department's position to ensure that?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, if there are some negotiations going on, first of all, I am not aware of it. And if a private operator wants to negotiate with a private company that is operating in this Province, then I have no reason to interfere in it. They have not reason to come to government. They have statutory rights to their timber logs, and as long as that legislation is in force, or the agreement is in force, that Price has the right to those timber lots, and they have the right to negotiate with anyone. And I am not necessarily going to get involved in any private negotiations between two private individuals or companies.

MR. RIDEOUT: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary. The hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: A supplementary to the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker. I wonder in view of the government's announced forest management policy, if the minister would not have to get his department involved in this so that the proper forest management policy would be protected in case this trade-off is occurring between those two companies?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. MAYNARD: The forest management policy states quite simply, Mr. Speaker, that the forest resource, whether it is owned by the companies or whether it is Crown resource, has to be utilized to the maximum possible benefit keeping in mind the annual allowable yield from the forested lands of this Province. Now if some company wanted to get the rights to cut hardwood, or wanted to cut hardwood on Price's limits, and they were not utilizing the hardwood, and they refused to give some company the rights, then we would certainly intervene. But if the hardwood is being utilized, I do not see why we should intervene and try to stop it since the forest management policy specifically states that we are supposed to have maximum utilization. And if hon. members want to get their wires uncrossed and read the forest management policy, and the forest policy of the Province, then they should do it.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I would ask - not ask, require the hon. gentleman to left and to right, not only during Question Periods but at all times, when the Chair intervenes to immediately stop talking and to take their seats. And I would specifically remind the hon. minister of my remarks a few minutes ago with respect to debate. As it is wrong to debate in asking questions or commenting on answers, it is equally impermissible to debate in giving an answer.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. I am sure the minister will recall that a year ago in this House, or almost a year ago, regulations or legislation was passed reducing the term for squatters right from sixty to twenty years and there are still no regulations or applications drawn up for this. I wonder what is taking so long, in view of the fact that people are trying to get mortgages and they cannot do that because they have no grant or legal title to their land?

So I wonder if the minister could tell me what is taking so long. It has almost been a year.

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

MR. MAYNARD: There have been a number of requests in for a title to land people have been occupying for twenty years or more. The legislation comes into effect on the last of January and if people can prove by affidavit that they have occupied a land for twenty years or more and they submit a survey then the title can be issued. It is as simple as that. There are no other regulations required other than the legislation.

MR. WHITE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister could give us an assurance that he will inform his officials of this, because every time I call them on behalf of a constituent they usually tell me the applications are not ready and they are not ready to proceed. So they are in just as much confusion with respect to this as I am. I would like to have that assurance that his officials will be notified.

MR. MAYNARD: No problem.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir, followed by the hon. member for Fogo.

MR. SIMMONS: I have a question for the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, Mr. Speaker. The Crown Lands applications as they apply to agriculture, and specifically as they apply to persons who are applying for agriculture leases, not for commercial reasons but for, if you like, family farm reasons. I understand that there are about seventy applications of that nature, people applying for agriculture land for their own family farm reasons. About seventy applications have been sitting in the department anywhere from six months to a year.

AN HON. MEMBER: They are better off -

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, if someone has a point of order they can raise it, but if not I shall continue my preamble to the question.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Preamble, that is a speech.

MR. SIMMONS: For the Minister from Grand Falls that is a speech, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. LUNDRIGAN: On a point of order. Hon. members across the way have been chastised a half a dozen times this afternoon for preambles that take the form of a speech, and I think they should be catching on by now.

MR. WHITE: Sit down, boy, sit down.

MR. SIMMONS: What a point of order!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

MR. ROBERTS: On that point of order. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Grand Falls, set out, I do not know if it was deliberately, but if it was not deliberate it was negligent, and either is an offence in the eyes of the House, to attempt to harrass and to provoke the hon. gentleman from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) who is asking a question in the perfectly proper and normal fashion.

The gentleman from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan), Sir, should know better, I submit, and I would ask Your Honour, Sir, please to direct the hon. gentleman's attention to the fact that the member who has been recognized by Your Honour and who is speaking to the House, has the right, Sir, to speak without interruption from hon. gentlemen opposite unless they wish to raise a point of order in which case of course they have the right to -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: He is supposed to stand up on his own feet.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! Order! Order!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I am talking of, Sir. I am not provoked by the hon. gentleman from Grand Falls because I have his measure, Sir, and I find it insignificant. But, Mr. Speaker, the fact remains, that the hon. -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is doing it again. I am speaking to a point of order, Sir, and what I am saying I think is very much to the point.

MR. RIDEOUT: Is the new House Leader controlling the boys?

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. member for Grand Falls, Sir, is fast becoming not just an irritant under the saddle of progress, but, Sir, an obstacle to any progress in this House.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Mr. Speaker, to the point of order. Cut out this personal garbage.

MR. SIMMONS: Are you the Speaker too?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, every time the hon. gentleman interrupts me, he merely re-enforces the point which I am trying to make, Sir, that the gentleman from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir was asking a perfectly proper question until the gentleman from Grand Falls interrupted him, not with a point of order but with low and scandalous attacks designed either to harrass the gentleman from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons)

Mr. Roberts:

in the exercise of his lawful rights or to provoke him, and if he succeeded in provoking him, Sir, that is no credit to the gentleman from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan). Mr. Speaker, I submit the gentleman from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) was asking a perfectly proper question, and he should be allowed to continue to ask it, and then the minister to whom it is addressed may answer it according to the rules.

MR. SPEAKER: The point of order before the Chair is whether the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir was out of order in asking his question. Up to the point that he had asked it, I would not be prepared to rule that he is out of order. I would ask him to continue with his question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: What was the ruling?

MR. WHITE: Go ahead.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question, you will recall, was for the Minister of Forestry. It relates to seventy applications, including some from my own district, but from all parts of the Province, seventy applications for Crown Land for agricultural purposes, not for commercial agriculture, but for family farm purposes. About seventy people have been waiting anywhere from six months to eighteen months. They have had no acknowledgement whatsoever from the department, either than the standard one that, "Your application has been received." These applications to date have not been registered, I understand the reason is that the department is considering a policy on the matter of farming for private reasons rather than for commercial reasons.

I wonder then, Mr. Speaker, would the minister indicate when we can expect to have that policy determined and announced? And when, in particular, the seventy applicants directly involved can be notified as to the status of their applications?

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

MR. E. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the number of applications, I know there are quite a few, I will take into account the number is seventy. I am not exactly sure when we are going to be able to deal with those applications, hopefully pretty soon, and when we are able to deal with applications of that kind I will be making a statement to the House of Assembly. But I cannot put an exact time on it right at this point.

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, I thank the minister for undertaking to pursue this matter. I just want to impress upon the House, first of all, that a number of people have waited as much as eighteen months, and my supplementary to the minister in that regard is; would he undertake, say, within the next few days to determine when these persons, in particular—and the figure seventy is not mine, but the figure of one of his officials given to me in recent days over the phone—would he undertake to determine when these applicants, in particular—might be notified as to the status of their applications?

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

MR. MAYNARD: I think what we will probably do, Mr. Speaker, is notify the applicants as to what we see is the possible time for dealing with their applications.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from Fogo.

CAPT. E. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Fisheries. Can the minister tell the House if it is the intention now to reopen many of the marine service centres around the Provinces, and provide that centre with a watchman?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, following representation made to the department by the fishermen of Wesleyville a watchman was placed in that particular service centre, which now makes it accessible to fishermen pretty well on a round the clock basis. We will be looking at other service centres, and where it is found necessary to take that

Mr. W. Carter:

kind of action, Mr. Speaker, to accommodate and to facilitate fishermen we will be doing it.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations, Sir. Could the minister tell us, Sir, whether any negotiations are underway under the aegis of his department between the St. John's City Council and their employees?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes, Mr. Speaker, there are, and a meeting should be held in about thirteen minutes time.

MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if the meeting is yet to be held, obviously we cannot asked what happened. Will the minister undertake to make a statement to the House as soon as he gets a report on this meeting? And would he further arrange to get a report?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes, Mr. Speaker, certainly, but it is quite possible that if the meeting starts at 4 o'clock they may be going beyond 6 but as soon as something is appropriate to be said I am sure that either side or myself, whichever one we agree on, will make a statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member for Ferryland.

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Fisheries a question. It is to do with the community stage that I think he proposed to build in Renews. Have you announced, Sir, as yet when you expect to start the construction of that stage?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, the community stage in Renews is part of a project programme we announced here, I think, on Monday or Tuesday, and construction will be commencing as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. O'BRIEN: Just one other question, Sir, I was wondering where in Renews you are expecting to build this stage. Is it going to be where there is an existing wharf, or are you planning to build a wharf as well, and what type of construction is it going to be?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister.

MR. CARTER: I am not sure where it is going to be built, but certainly we will be consulting with the fishermen's groups in the area, fishermen's committee, maybe the council, and I would suspect that the—indeed I am sure, that it will be a wooden frame construction. But as, again, to where it is built, that will be decided by the fishermen themselves, I presume, working in consolidation with our department.

MR. O'BRIEN: That will be with concrete floors, and so on.

MR. CARTER: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, this is a question for the Minister of Social Services, and the question arises out of a statement that he

MR. LUSH: made in the House recently with respect to the Auditor General's Report and dealing with the fact that there was \$2 million outstanding with respect to his department. And the minister, I think, was saying that with respect to recoverable overpayments that the system used by his department was one of the best in Canada. I am wondering if the minister probably could briefly inform the House, what is it about this recoverable overpayment system that makes it the best in Canada?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. BRETT: It is the best, Mr. Speaker, because it is probably the only effective one. When I attended the last Ministers' Conference in Ottawa, six or seven months ago, I presented a paper on this problem of overpayment. What prompted me to do it was the Ombudsman, the one that we see on television on Sunday night. He was after me for quite some months to go on that programme. He picked up a couple of cases here in the province, and he was using it on the programme. And I realized we did have a problem here, and I presented this paper at the Ministers Meeting, and surprisingly enough none of the other nine provinces—well, maybe B.C. has a little bit of concern—but certainly the other eight have none whatsoever. I got practically no support for my paper. And while they make feeble and faint attempts to collect glaring overpayments, that is about all, but there is no real effective system. As I said, B.C. is somewhat concerned but they do not have an effective system like we do. We receive assignments from the Unemployment Insurance Commission which is followed up and overpayments are set up, and we do the same thing with the Canada Pension Plan, Workman's Compensation, and any other payments from any other department in government, or any other government, that would create an overpayment, and an account is set up in every single case. And I think that because we have been so efficient the end result is that we have \$2 million on the books now. We were collecting 10 per cent of the entitlement from

MR. BRETT: people who are receiving welfare for Social Assistance, and then people who had overpayments and were not on Social Assistance then we made efforts to collect as much as we could. Like in the case of Canada Pension, in some cases we would ask them to surrender the first cheque, if the overpayment was large. But we have cut down on that now, we are reducing it from ten to five because

Mr. Brett.

it is resulting in a hardship in some cases, particularly in the Winter months when the fuel bill is high. But our system is effective, and it is the best. And ironically enough the Auditor General still comes out and says, "We are not making enough effort."

MR. LUSH: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. LUSH: Do I understand from the minister that what the department is now doing is that they are collecting ten per cent of the entitlement?

MR. BRETT: Right.

MR. LUSH: And I think he said that the department was thinking about changing that to five per cent. Now then what is it about it that makes it the best in Canada? Is it the rate or is it the method?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. BRETT: It is the method, Mr. Speaker. As far as I know we are the only Province who has a complete system. We go into every case. The other provinces, if there is a glaring example of an overpayment, they would pick it up, but they do not go looking for them, but we do. We have three or four on staff who do nothing else but record overpayments.

MR. LUSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I think there are a couple of hon. members with supplementaries, but I will recognize the original questioner, and time will only permit this question and answer.

MR. LUSH: I am certainly pleased to hear that the rate has been reduced from ten per cent to five per cent, because I think, like the hon. minister, I have gotten several complaints that the rate is too high, particularly in the cases of people who receive overpayment innocently, and I expect this happens in some cases, and sometimes they are not caught up until six, seven, eight, nine months. I wonder, in view of this, if the minister is able to indicate

Mr. Lush.

to the House how soon this will be brought into effect,
the five per cent, instead of the ten per cent?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. BRETT: The beginning of the fiscal year.

o o o

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgent public importance; namely, that in view of the present emergency situation in St. John's this House debate the advisability of enforcing a thirty day cooling off period between the striking municipal workers and the city council thus ensuring a speedy return to normalcy.

MR. SPEAKER: I am awaiting now so that I can get an exact copy of what the matter is the hon. gentleman proposes.

As hon. members are aware, the responsibility of the Speaker pursuant to the asking for leave under this Standing Order is set out quite concisely in our precedent, and indeed in Beauchesne, and they coincide in this case, whereby it says in Beauchesne, page ninety: "The Speaker's duty with regard to a motion to adjourn the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance is confined to determining as to where in the first instance a motion so proposed is in order." And depending on the Speaker's decision there, it is the House which determines whether they wish to debate it or not. My responsibility is limited to determining whether it is in order, and in determining that one of the most important matters to which I have to turn my mind in Beauchesne, and in a more recent, almost a verbatim extract one can find in the House of Commons' Hansard, March 11, 1970 -

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, with respect to this, we are trying to hear what you are saying, but there seems to be an inordinately large number of inordinately loud conversations in the House, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members please remain quiet.

As was said in the House of Commons' Chair March 11, 1970, the matter to which the Chair has to direct its attention is the probability of the matter being brought before the House within a reasonable length of time by another means. The debate on the Address in Reply is before the House. As far as I know it is the intention of the government to call it today or certainly within the quite near future, and that would permit debate on any matters of public concern and public interest to the Province. Therefore, pursuant to the authority I have on this matter, I cannot rule it in order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Order (1).

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I do not have a Standing Order 23, but I earlier asked whether the government would be willing to consider, in effect, permitting a debate this afternoon on the labour situation generally. And I wonder if the House Leader - whether any considerations have been given and, if so, whether they are prepared to do this?

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

MR. B. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, two points on that. The matter has been discussed, and I have discussed it. Number one point is that negotiations are ongoing on a number of the disputes. Number two is, as Your Honour has ruled on a previous motion a few minutes ago, the Address in Reply debate is to be called, and hon. members, in the opinion of this side of the House, will have ample opportunity to discuss the various matters which are presently ongoing in Province relating to the subject matter that the Leader of the Opposition just raised.

MR. SPEAKER: Order (1) the debate on the sub-amendment.

The hon. member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to your ruling that since the Address in Reply was next on the Order Paper, and that therefore there would be ample opportunity to raise this matter that I attempted to raise under Standing Order 23, I am rising for a brief comment to address the sub-amendment. Certainly since the hon. member from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is not in the House he has waived his right to speak for an unlimited period of time. Your Honour quite rightly ruled yesterday that no one can speak for an unlimited period of time, but I do feel the member from LaPoile was attempting to set such a record.

However because of this opportunity afforded me to bring up these important matters, I would like to confine my slot on the Address in Reply entirely to the matter that I wished to raise under Standing Order 23.

MR. ROBERTS: Put a sub-amendment (Inaudible).

MR. J. CARTER: I will, I will, I will. This will only take a moment.

MR. ROBERTS: I mean, I do not know, we got a right too.

AN HON. MEMBER: We got a right too, yes, of course.

MR. J. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, almost one-third of Newfoundlanders live in or do business with or have occasion to come into St. John's nearly every day so that this strike that is now in front, tying up the city of St. John's, is affecting nearly one-third of all Newfoundlanders. You merely have to look out the windows behind Your Honour to see traffic stalled to a standstill. Business is practically dead. No one is doing any shopping. Now whether or not they will make up for this lost time is another matter, but it is certain that businesses are seriously affected. But far more important than that, Mr. Speaker, is the danger to school children, and it is not a question of if some school child is injured, but a question of when. And I think that unless this House takes it upon itself, or this government takes it upon itself to ensure a speedy return to normalcy that lives could very well be endangered if not lost.

Strikes are a poor way to handle things in the best of circumstances. And in the United States the Taft-Hartley Law which required, I think, a ninety day cooling off period for disputes, did serve to do just that, and cool off a great many disputes, and brought the two parties to the bargaining table again, and it seemed to work very well. And I suggest that the government consider just this way of handling these strikes. I realize very well that you do not take away a person's right to strike even if they are working in an essential part of government services. But certainly we could try a thirty day cooling off period and see what happens. Perhaps as a longer term solution labour courts might be worth considering. At the present time if Your Honour owes me a debt I do not sit on your doorstep to collect the debt, I am prepared to take Your Honour to

Mr. J. Carter:

court and let another agency handle this. In the meantime, Your Honour goes about his business and I go about mine. There is no interruption

MR. J. CARTER: in our mutual affairs. However, this business of confrontation every time a dispute arises has got to stop. That is about all there is to say to it, Mr. Speaker. This House, this government, this city has a very heavy responsibility.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question? Those in favour "aye", contrary "Nay", I declare the sub-amendment defeated.

The hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I understand now I am speaking on the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition, and as such I will, because it has grown customary in this House, to instead of speaking in the Throne Speech, to speak on matters pertaining to the Throne Speech in amendments.

With respect to the Throne Speech itself, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that having listened to it, it was a little bit different than other Throne Speeches but it still comes couched in resplendent phrases and platitudes, as all Throne Speeches do, which are put together for the purpose of appeasing and pleasing the people, and they do not really ever - they are never intended, and God help the government that does not do this because the public has gotten accustomed to all sorts of goodies. It is like a post-Christmas visit from Santa Claus. But now, I think, more than ever before, it is essential to communicate to the people in this Province - it has been said before by many and needs to be said again - the stark realities of the state of the Province and their effect upon and their meaning upon John Q. Citizen.

To me, really, I think the public would have been better served if the Throne Speech in these times had simply noted that we are in the grip of very severe

MR. MARSHALL: financial difficulties which threaten to engulf us, the effect upon the residents of our worsening financial position, and most importantly the steps which government intend to take to meet these difficulties before we arrive at an insurmountable crisis.

Now Wayfarer, whom everybody knows is a very distinguished newspaper man amongst his many other qualities, recently noted in one of his columns that perhaps we should not talk about our financial position as a crisis. There is a danger, I know, in overstating the present situation and perhaps we should not get to the stage where we state it where there appears to be a necessity of panic. There is no doubt in my mind that it is necessary again and again for members to draw this to the attention of the public because I think, really, the people of Newfoundland, as I say, would be better served if we had a debate on the nature of our financial condition, its effect and what the government is prepared to do with respect to this particular position. I think if this debate centered around this rather than on the items that come up on the sub-amendment particularly, I think that this House would regain an awful of its relevancy and regain much of its lost esteem in the eyes of the people of this Province, because, Mr. Speaker, these are extremely vital and serious issues that effect each and every one of us.

It is not my intention, Your Honour, to speak in this debate for a very long time about the severity of our present situation. My views on this by no means claim to be original at all, are known and I will have adequate opportunity to voice them again, I know, when the Budget Speech is introduced. All that need be said on this aspect of it at the present time, about the severity of the condition, is the fact that we now have an enormous per capita debt, disproportionate to our ability to produce and

MR. MARSHALL: that this per capita debt, which is reflected in the debt service fund, I think can be compared to a thermometer, and as this thermometer goes up, as the debt service fund of this Province goes up, we see ourselves our financial condition and the economy becoming rapidly overheated like a caldron from which it is increasingly difficult to extract even our basic needs in this Province. And so it will be, and so the thermometer goes up, I say, year after year, and so the heat gets hotter as it goes on, but so unfortunately it does not seem to have any effect upon the people of this Province and upon this Legislature with respect to the real realization of it. Neither do I intend at this stage, Mr. Speaker, to dwell too much upon the effect of this looming situation which is before us. While I think everybody's ego tends to delight from time to time in pretended gifts of clairvoyance I am going to spare the House this at the particular time. Because the fact of the matter is that the effect will only be perceived when it is experienced, Mr. Speaker. We experienced some of this last year, for instance, in cuts in the health budget which resulted in elective surgery becoming less accessible and hospital facilities diluted. But I know, as everybody else knows in this Province, that just as the first symptoms of pain are ignored by persons, it looks like we will have to wait until the distress becomes more acute before anything is really done about it that ought to be done. I only hope and pray, Mr. Speaker, that the distress will not become terminal before the condition is dealt with.

MR. SMALLWOOD: In the meanwhile we live in blissful ignorance of the danger.

MR. MARSHALL: That is right. We live in - I do not think we can. I do not think that we can afford to live in the blissful ignorance, but unfortunately it is the state in which we now find

MR. MARSHALL: ourselves.

But I feel in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, that what we should concern ourselves with are constructive suggestions as to what can possibly be done about the situation.

Before, and I am not going to talk here about cuts and savings and expenditures; as I say, I will get to that when the Budget Debate comes along. That is the proper place for it. But what I am talking about is what must be done, is what changes should take place in this economy and for us to be able in the shortest period of time possible to remedy the situation in which we find ourselves.

Now before addressing ourselves to this question I think we do have to go into history, because we have to ask ourselves if we are talking about remedies as to what the cause of the present situation is. And this does not admit to an easy answer. Obviously there are many causes. But I can visualize in generalistic terms that economists in their usual bland phrases in years to come when they go back over our history, will just very tritely say the economic unit that is Newfoundland, was unable to produce sufficient goods and services to meet the demands of its people. Now that is a generalized statement and really what could be more apt and really what could be more true. Because we are all familiar with the fact that demand is outstripping production in this Province and as a result we have fallen into debt. We cannot provide that which has been demanded. I will not get into the matter of demand at the present time. I presume to deal mainly with that element of production because I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact I am certain, that our inability to produce as a factor contributing to our financial difficulties is really fully appreciated in this Province. And I feel that

MR. MARSHALL: one of the main causes, and one of the principle causes of our present situation, and our unfavourable financial condition and economy is the dismal and abysmal failure of all of our economic development policies since 1949.

What could be more evident of this, Mr. Speaker, that the present situation where we now find for the first time somebody taking the tiller as it were in our fisheries, the federal government after being urged by the provincial government taking the initiative and declaring the 200 mile limit. ICNAF setting a quota on the fisheries, and we get a fisheries quota set and what do we find? After 400 years of our history this Province only has the ability to catch only a paltry percentage of the allowable catch.

MR. MARSHALL: Surely that has to tell us something. After 400 years -

PREMIER MOORES: Who said, "Burn your boats"?

MR. MARSHALL: After 400 years when the fishery has been prosecuted in this Province, and at the present time at the price of fish in the European countries and in the States we still have a fishing industry in this Province that cannot exist unless it is very heavily subsidized.

Now I do not presume to have, Mr. Speaker, all of the answers, or perhaps any of them, but this I do know; it is quite obvious that this House has to come to grips and it has to come to grips very, very seriously with this particular situation. We have not been able to produce, and we have to turn this around. We have to ask ourselves all sorts of questions. We have to ask ourselves as to the people who have been entrusted with the production of this resource, that is the fishing merchants over this period of time, they obviously have not been that successful. We have to enquire into the causes, perhaps it is not their fault and what have you. We have to look at the effect of all this upon the resettlement programme that was instituted and followed and went to a certain stage and then it was stopped, and we have to ask ourselves questions now as to whether instead of arresting it maybe the time has come for properly thought-out policies of instead of stopping it, reversing it so that people can have ready access to fishing grounds which I understand they find very difficult to get to at the present time.

We have to ask ourselves all sorts of other questions on the effect of -

MR. SMALLWOOD: The hon. gentleman spelled it out a little, but reversing, what does he mean by reversing it? Would he spell it out a little?

MR. MARSHALL: What I mean by reversing it, I say we have to have - look, it seems to me that we turned and we did this type

MR. MARSHALL: or it was done, we did not agree with it, but it was done I will say at the time in good faith by other people. And what happened was it was done at a time when communications had increased, the possibility of communication in educational means increased and what have you. But the fact of the matter is that the inshore fishery of this Province, I am given to understand, is suffering to a certain extent because people who lived in these areas, who were put in other centralized areas, now have great difficulty in getting to their fishing grounds. And if we are to increase our potential for catch of fish as well as production of fish and the marketing of fish and what have you, that perhaps we have to look at the possibility of reversing it and allowing these people - as a matter of fact not just allowing them because they are allowed now, I understand - but encouraging these people where it is necessary to go back from the places from whence they came and from whence they had a reasonable livelihood. Now I know there were hardships and what have you.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the member allow me again?

MR. MARSHALL: Yes.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Does the hon. member mean that to carry on the inshore fishery it is necessary for people so as to be near the fishing grounds to go back and live, or merely to use those places as the point of operation of the fishery in the fishing season but continue to live where they live now.

MR. MARSHALL: No, I do not mean that. I do not mean that is absolutely necessary for that, but what I mean is that these resettlement programmes have not worked, Mr. Speaker, in my view, and while the government has arrested it and has stopped it, except where it is voluntary, I think we have to look at the possibility of people who wish to get back for the purpose of earning a reasonable living, not necessarily in the same places but dispersing our population rather than consolidating it which

MR. MARSHALL: was the position before, to make the fishing fields more amenable.

Now I say we have to look and we have to consider these things because of the failure. We have also to look at the effect of our social welfare schemes, Mr. Speaker, around this Province, something that a politician is not really supposed to speak about. But the fact of the matter is that in 1949 with the bountiful blessings of Confederation we had injected into this Province, like a shot, programmes which had evolved over a period of time on the Mainland of Canada. And it is

MR. MARSHALL:

obvious, that these programmes had very heavy effect, beneficial effects in many cases certainly, but they also had effect on our productivity. But most of all, Mr. Speaker, when we are looking at this I think we have to look at our shipwrecks on the land. It is absolutely incredible to me that we have been in this House for two weeks and what has been said about our industrial development of the oil refinery and the Labrador Linerboard, what has been said with respect to those two economic activities which are taking quite a bit of resource, of the economic resource from the people of this Province - and I will get to that in a moment, the exact measure of it - that there has been virtually no debate about it at all. We have heard all about rabbits and grand! We went on for a long period of time about rabbits, and I am not derogating about the fact that their points were very important and certainly they should have been brought up. We even got into the sex life of the rabbit, Mr. Speaker. We got into lawyers again, from the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), which is certainly a very interesting subject - but when you hear it over and over again, when we keep talking about in this area, you get almost the feeling that this Assembly is fiddling while Rome burns. Because the fact of the matter is there is no more pressing cause of debate in this Province today than the oil refinery, the three great industrial developments that are presently under way or presently with us, presently having an effect - I wish they were under way - the oil refinery, the Labrador Linerboard Mill, and the Upper Churchill. I shall not need to talk about the host of the predecessors that had occurred before them.

But we cannot overlook, we certainly cannot overlook these particular types of endeavour, and their immediate effect. The oil refinery, through the skill of this present government the liability was reduced, but it still is, Mr. Speaker, at the present time \$40 million, originally \$30 million on the second mortgage. The interest is capitalized at \$40 million. It is probably near between \$40 million and \$45 million. I do not know whether it has been paid or not, anything

MR. MARSHALL:

has been paid on it. But certainly you can take it at \$40 million. There is a \$40 million non-productive debt on which, Mr. Speaker, we have approximately \$4 million being paid out. We have that situation down there, Mr. Speaker, and I think we have to look very, very carefully at the future of the oil refinery. We have to look at it from many viewpoints, not only just the cost to this Province, but we have to look at the very searching question as to whether or not at any price this Province can really afford the continuation of the operations of the oil refinery, particularly after you consider the disasters which occurred in the Atlantic recently where oil tankers did turn over. And if they turned over off the Coast of the United States the same thing could happen here, and you have to balance the future of the oil refinery off against this fishery with the many jobs that it affords.

That is not what I am talking about here at the present time. Let us look at the cost of that \$5 million. Something that was supposed to be started in good faith as a productive venture, was supposed to have brought us a petrochemical complex and much employment. At the time it was brought in it was said that there was no justification for this refinery unless there was a petrochemical complex. There never was one, and maybe there is no justification for it now. But the cost is heavy.

Labrador Linerboard, now there is another one that we have to come to grips with in this House. I have said before, and I say it again, that the fullest type of information about that particular endeavour since it was taken over, what has happened to it and how much money has gone into it, has to be presented in the very minutest detail to the people of this Province. The fact of the matter is that here you have an industry - these industries, by the way, all have the same characteristic; they are heavy, industrialized industries where the source of the raw material is not readily available. In the Labrador Linerboard as we know, the mill is in Stephenville and the source of the materials was in Labrador.

But the cost to us, the immediate cost, let us look at it. It was taken over at a cost of \$160 million, and that

MR. MARSHALL: \$160 million is right here, an obligation of the people of this Province right now, today. Since then the Stephenville Linerboard Act was brought in which allowed an expenditure and this House authorized an expenditure, I am not sure, it was certainly \$75 million and it might be \$100 million. And if any members can enlighten me on that, whether it was \$75 million or \$100 million, it was certainly \$75 million. If we take \$75 million there you have \$250 million of our money in the linerboard mill. All of these, I say, were started in good faith but they were started by government, by the government of the day, in good faith with the thought of providing jobs. And these are the jobs that are needed in this Province and every government is very sore put to provide them and has to attempt to provide jobs.

But I say that in our efforts to provide the short-term jobs for political or what-have-you gains, construction jobs, we have a long-term albatross around our neck, and we have a debt around our neck which threatens to strangle us. So I do not think - it has been said before and it can be said again and again - the people of this Province can no longer tolerate the type of industrial development, even though it is done with good faith, for the purpose of providing construction jobs.

Now another development which has somewhat similar characteristics to this is the Lower Churchill development. Here again, while there was a desire to provide cheap electricity, I do not think any one can deny that there was a desire here to provide jobs. After all, this is the responsibility with which a government is saddled. The Teshmont feasibility study - the Teshmont, Zinder Associates - it is all right to get feasibility studies, Mr. Speaker, but one has to read them as well. And this Teshmont feasibility study to a large extent puts a great reliance on the fact that this particular project is going to trigger certain industries. And if you look somewhere in the first twenty pages of that report you will find mention of a

MR. MARSHALL: petro-chemical complex it was supposed to bring, an aluminium plant, a cement plant and what have you. The same type of dream.

Now I think it is necessary for us to realize, in this Province, and this is the point I am trying to make, that we can no longer dream the impossible dreams that we have been dreaming about the heavy type of industrialization that they have and enjoy in places like Chicago, Detroit and Hamilton, if you want to put it that way. We can no longer aim for that type of industrial activity and we have to get back to the basic type of activity, because the cost of these projects is enormous. I add to that, of course, the Lower Churchill as well. Hon. members will recall the particular stand I took on the Lower Churchill at the time and we now have \$77 million tied up in that which is non-productive. All in good faith. All done in good faith.

There is one thing about this government I will say, that when mistakes are made they turn out to be investments because of the \$160 million that was put in the Upper Churchill, we are getting some dividends back, we know that. But the fact of the matter is, if you take these three projects, Mr. Speaker, take these three projects and you have in the vicinity of \$500 million at the present time tied up. Not only is this \$500 million tied up but it is non-productive, really; it is a cost to the treasury. Instead of contributing to us it is a cost to the treasury. \$50 million a year, or you take off the dividends you receive from CFLCo and you have a net cost to this Province of about \$40 million from these three industrial development projects. \$40 million on the debt service fund. Here we could cut down our expenditure - we could, we cannot just rub them out now, but if they had not been gone into right now that would have been \$40 million off our debt service fund. I submit that is -

AN HON. MEMBER: That is not \$40 million annually is it?

MR. MARSHALL: \$40 million annually, yes, and more annually because that \$40 million is added on and we, in effect, are paying interest on that as well. So I do not think one needs any more demonstrable proof that that of the fact that we cannot go into this type of industry.

Mr. Marshall:

this government, I feel, the time has come now, and the task is enormous because the whole basis of our economic development has to be turned around. The manpower in this Province is out of balance, the manpower of this Province is really out of balance because it has been funnelled into the construction industry, and all that we have been able to provide, and the construction industry is certainly important, nobody is derogating it, but all we have been able to provide is we have seen from the unemployment and construction industry in that field, are really in effect short term jobs at very heavy long term costs. They are all heavy industrialization where the source of the raw material is not there, and they are all costing us dearly now, and I say it is not too bad after twenty-five minutes speaking we have \$500 million where we see that this Province, of the public debt, of approximately one-quarter of the public debt, that with proper types of approaches, with the different types of approaches, would not be a debt around our neck right now.

There is another way when we are talking about the things that can be done, another long range policy, Mr. Speaker, which will save money, and this is what I believe is the scrupulous and unbending and unfailing and unflinching adherence to the public tender system in this Province, and particularly to the Public Tendering Act. Now I did not know just how much it cost the people of this Province until in the last Assembly when the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) rose to his feet, the Leader of the previous administration, he indicated at the time, and as far as I can see, that we would have saved this Province between \$250 million and \$400 million. Now I refer to the hon. member's speech on June 3, 1976, and after I get through referring to the hon. member's speech, Mr. Speaker, on that date - I will have a few words to say - first of all I just draw to the attention of hon. members the words that were used, and to think of how incredible it is that these words were used, and in any other province of Canada, I would suggest to you, that these words would have

Mr. Marshall:

been used, and there would have been screaming headlines from one end of the particular province to the other.

The hon. member at the time in his speech was talking about reform, and on June 3, Tape No.3204, Page 9984 he said, "There is another reform that this Province needs today and that is the sternest possible system, the sternest possible system of awarding government business on tender. Now I will pay the administration the tribute of saying that as far as I can notice they do advertise extensively and heavily in the newspapers when they have contracts to award or orders to place. And I will say from superficial appearance that is all I know about it, they are doing their business on tender."

Then he goes on to say, or goes a step further about the volume of the business, he refers to the volume of the business that this government does, and compares it to the CNR, and more than the CNR and various other large corporations altogether.

And on the following pages he says "It is simply staggering hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars a year," he says - now this is the Leader of the previous administration, and he was Premier so he knows how much business is done - "I dread the thought, he said, of the present government being like the government they succeeded, being in debt to rich men, private companies, corporations, organizations for the funds they need to conduct the general elections. I dread the thought of it." Then there was a little bit banter, as it goes back and forth across the House from time to time. The hon. member was being sincere at the time when he got up and he made these statements and some hon. members over here made reference to what went on in his administration. So he said, All right, all right, the person can change etc., as a person who can change.

Then on page 9986 he said what I consider to be the most startling, the most startling revelation that possibly has ever been made by a leader of any administration,

Mr. Marshall.

"To reform the existing system," the hon. member for Twillingate said (Mr. Smallwood), "of doing this vast amount of business, these hundreds of millions of dollars each year, could save \$10 million to \$15 million a year to the public chest. By that I mean that the donors are receiving \$10 million to \$15 million out of the public chest in return for their private donations which did not amount to that much, of course. They donated during or leading up to a general election, but they received a payment, they get their money each year after the elections are over until the next one comes up." Now I would like to read that passage again, Mr. Speaker, because it was - I heard it. And when I heard the hon. member say it - I am not condemning the hon. member now-himself. I am talking about the system as the system was - but when I heard it it was in the wee hours of the morning, the very last day of this session that he said it, when the hon. member was speaking, and I could not believe my ears. I really could not believe my words that this type of statement could be made by the leader of a former administration. And as I say, I am not doing this now to put the hon. member up to ask any questions or anything else, but I am making that as a statement; that the hon. member has made this particular statement in this House, and I expected to pick up the paper the next day, pick up the paper and read it in the headlines. I expected to turn on the radio or hear it on the radio, or I expected to hear it on the television station, because I am quite sure that in any other forum other than in Newfoundland you probably would, and alas and alack, Mr. Speaker, we did not hear a single solitary word about it.

Let me just read it again so that members can realize the enormity of it, and I have copies that I will give to the members of the press so that they can perhaps engross it a bit now on second looking. The hon. gentleman said, "To reform the existing system of doing this vast amount of business, these millions of dollars each year could save \$10 million to \$15 million a year to the public chest. By that I mean that the donors are receiving \$10 million

Mr. Marshall.

to \$15 million a year out of the public chest in return for their private donations which did not amount to that much, of course. They donated during or leading up to a general election. But they received the payment, they get their money each year after the elections are over until the next one comes up." Now what could be more startling than that particular revelation? I am not saying that it is necessarily peculiar to, you know, just one particular government. This type of thing occurred, Mr. Speaker, if anyone knows anything about Newfoundland history, prior to 1933 - and was one of the basic reasons why this Province lost its self government amongst others. So it was not peculiar to that -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the hon. member allow me to confirm the accuracy of - I am hoarse, because I just came from speaking for an hour and a half at another place earlier today - I confirm now every word that he has quoted as an accurate quoting of what I said. I confirm now again what I said. I did not emphasize it nearly enough, because it is one of the moral crimes in this Province, and it could be said of almost any other province in Canada. And as the hon. gentleman says, it did not begin in 1949 .

MR. MARSHALL: I agree.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Because there was so much more money in Newfoundland beginning with 1949, it would be on a bigger scale; but previous to 1949, on a somewhat smaller scale, it was practiced along exactly the same lines.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes, I will agree with what the hon. gentleman says, but I do say this, you know, because I do not like to give the impression that when one is up speaking that I am up trying to make points against the hon. member's previous administration, because when I was on the other side, I used to love to do that, but now that administration is gone, But I do say it from - I want to put it from this point of view, that I do not deny that there other governments who have done it. And without attempting to be hypocritical, I do not

Mr. Marshall.

think that there is any excuse under Heaven for it, and I think that this is what this government - now this government is elected, and all governments are elected to change.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Because what we are saying is the amazing thing, if you want to look at it, Mr. Speaker, is this, that between \$230 million and \$400 million, if you want to project it over the twenty-three years, of the

MR. MARSHALL: public debt was paid out in what amounts to be, and there is no other way of talking about it, was popularly known as graft. In other words, the people who are not in hospital beds today and do not get their elective surgery, and the people in the future who are going to find the pinch in years to come, and they are going to find it pretty hard, can thank this particular policy.

Now how this situation occurred and whether it was going to continue - I knew it was bad, I never knew it was so bad - was one of the things and one of the major reasons, if one may dwell upon one's self for a moment, that I feel that I wanted to do something when I got in the political life. And it was for that reason that I myself publically, personally, drafted and introduced The Public Tenders Act in this Province and I think quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, it is one of the best and greatest achievements that this government has done, and it might seem a little bit egotistical to say that when you are the introducer of it, and the mover of it, but I do think it is, and I think if I do not say it nobody else will. Because I noticed in the past election campaign -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. MARSHALL: - that other things seemed to have much more of a predominance with this government rather than the Public Tenders Act, and I think this government has great cause to brag a great deal and display its wares in the Public Tenders Act. But by the same token I also say, Mr. Speaker, that there is no way that I will remain silent in any way, or that I will condone in any way any deviation whatsoever from the provisions of that act, be they deviations from that act in reality against the exact letter of the act, or against the spirit of the act, and I suggest to other hon. members - and I know

MR. MARSHALL: hon. members will agree with me, I am not alone in ~~this - - but~~ if they adopt that particular attitude we would come a giant step forward to really realizing responsible government in this Province.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, before the hon. gentleman proceeds, would he let me draw his attention to the fact that there have been in the Province since Confederation what, seven, eight, nine general elections right?

AN HON. MEMBER: That is right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I think it is nine, and to fight general election number one, that is twenty-eight years ago about, it cost a political party \$100,000, \$150,000. That by the time election number eight or nine had arrived it is up around \$1 million. Now where does that \$1 million come from?

MR. MARSHALL: I know where the \$1 million came from. The money in effect, Mr. Speaker, has, translated, come really from the pockets of the people of this Province because right now we have between \$250 million and \$400 million added to the public debt of this Province. I think really what the hon. member is saying is this is the system and we have to have, and he will agree, we have to change the system.

Now one of the things that I have heard mooted about is the provision of the public financing of election expenses. But I think that the first thing that has to be done, and I would say if we were in the Province of Alberta, a wealthy Province, or we were in British Columbia, a wealthy Province, all right we could afford that. But I am myself, Mr. Speaker, apprehensive, to say the least, about our abilities to provide the bare necessities in the years to come for the people of this Province, and I wonder whether we can afford it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Can we afford not to?

MR. MARSHALL: No. No, I think that there is a first step that we have to take to tackle it is to regulate and regulate very, very

MR. MARSHALL: heavily the amount of money that may be spent. Because why should a government - that is a different thing than saying the public has got to pay the election expenses - and maybe some of them like television time or what have you, but elections should not depend upon how much money a particular party should be able to spend.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Right.

MR. ROBERTS: Or the government.

MR. MARSHALL: And what I feel that should happen is that there has been so much money spent on election campaigns in this Province it has been disgraceful.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes.

MR. MARSHALL: And the first thing that we have to do is bring in regulations prohibiting -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Right.

MR. MARSHALL: - and to put teeth

MR. MARSHALL:

in the regulations. And instead of providing for penalties, fines that the wealthy people might be able to pass out with a laugh and regain it from pap and graft afterwards, I suggest what we do is we have mandatory jail sentences as the sanction behind these rules. I think this is the first thing that we have to attempt.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Could that be done outside the ambit of the Criminal Code of Canada?

MR. MARSHALL: Well, that is another issue. But I say, anyway, we make the most stringent ones we can.

But the salient matter that I want to talk about here in this speech, Mr. Speaker, is to express a great deal of sadness at the fact that an admission of that nature was made - not that it was made, it was truthfully made - but that it occurred and that it had occurred and it occurs in governments, I know - and as the hon. member says long since past. I do say though - and I know the press is very sensitive to criticism and it will probably result in, you know, different types of things occurring - but I do say that the press of this Province in this particular occasion, not on all occasions, had to be very soundly asleep that night to have this statement made by a former Premier and not even to have it noticed in the public press.

Now I come back again -

MR. SMALLWOOD: The hon. gentleman will curse on me mentally, but he has been very gracious and very generous in allowing me to question him. Does he remember a speech I made here in the past year drawing attention to the perilous financial state of the Province, followed the following day by a speech by the hon. gentleman saying almost exactly the same thing, and the day after that a speech by the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) saying exactly the same thing, the day after that a speech by Mr. John Crosbie saying exactly the same thing, and the day after that a speech by the Premier himself and not one word of it appeared in print or on the radio, not a word of the five speeches, not a word!

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman said that and, you know, he can draw it. I understand the hon. gentleman although he will

MR. MARSHALL:

probably be here for many more years, his political aspirations are not so long, mine are, I hope quite a bit longer. So I do not necessarily want to go full scale into the press. But I do agree on the -

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?

MR. MARSHALL: Because it gets hidden, you see, after a little while, you say something and then afterwards - but anyway I do not really seriously, I could not care less about that. But what I want to draw to the attention of this Assembly, I think the most enormous thing is that it was not noticed.

The other enormous thing is that it had - and very sadly - that it had to be said at all. In my speech I have talked about two separate issues in this Province, one of which, the dream of heavy industrialization for the construction jobs, which has cost this Province, I am demonstrated, \$500 million. The other the matter of - well for want of another word - election expenses, election financing - there is another word that could describe it that I will not use - which has cost this Province between at least \$250 million and \$400 million. Taken at the most that is \$900 million. We go on a little bit farther, we will probably get down if we get enough sense and see this Province is viable really after all, and this Province can support itself if it has the proper, as is say, direction and leadership in this Province. And the onus on the government at this time is heavier than it has ever been before because there are things to be done and there are very serious matters that have to be dealt with.

My time is limited. I wish I could go on but I cannot. But I want to just point out again that I would like to see - and I think it is a matter of urgency in this Assembly - instead of talking about the sex life of the rabbit and about lawyers and what have you, as important as both the sex life of the rabbit and lawyers are, not necessarily in that order, Mr. Speaker, that this Assembly should get down to the brass tacks of this Province, what threatens to sink the ship of state, and that is these three major industries and what is to be done about it. I would like to have some words about it and I know other members would. But before we do that we have to have a complete revelation as to the situation. I also think,

Mr. Marshall.

Mr. Speaker, that my main reason for speaking is to urge that there be a dramatic change in our attitude towards industrial and economic development in this Province. And when I say since 1949, I mean from 1949 to today. We can no longer bring in industry, which is costing this Province so dearly, purely and simply for the purpose of bringing short-term construction jobs with the enormous long-term debt that it casts on the people of this Province. But most important - I get back to my pet subject - and I say that this government has to continue, and it has to stop up any leaks that it may have in the public tendering system in this Province. And each and every member has to insist - and if you do not know the reason why - look at the proof you have of the speech given by the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) in the last session if you want a reason for it - every member has to insist that this government continue to carry on, follow that Public Tender Act right - in its spirit and its meaning :- right down from the Section (1) right down to the end without there being any deviation whatsoever. And any deviation from it, I might say, will not receive my approval or what have you. As a matter of fact, it might receive certain other things.

I, Mr. Speaker, in closing would like to, because there have been references to the Public Tender Act - I just put this in as an aside - in the Auditor General's Report, and it has been much mooted. Another matter of great satisfaction to me is the fact that before that public tender went in - because we have sat here - we will not talk about the previous administration - but before that public tender went in, there were no such observations. Why? Because there was no such thing as a Public Tender Act. And it was this administration that created the machinery for the Auditor General to make the observations which he did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Now having said that, at the same time, I look forward with great expectation to the promised explanation of the

Mr. Marshall.

hon. Minister of Public Works and Services to the alleged circumvention of the provisions of the Public Tender Act itself. I, too, want to know the name of company A, B and C.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: I, too, want to know, Mr. Speaker, whether there were procedures implemented anyway at all to avoid the spirit of and intent of that act, and if there were, I will expect the hon. minister, as I know he is just as concerned about it, by the way as I am - he is just as concerned as I am - I will expect the hon. minister to take such steps as are necessary to see that there is no repetition, and if necessary, to make heads roll so that this will not occur.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: We cannot afford, Mr. Speaker, an administration, which after twenty-three years of its trusteeship of this Province, give to the people of this Province a legacy of, yea, yet another \$400 million of debt which is going to keep people out of hospital beds and children out of school.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I have been waiting now for about a week and a half to speak. In view of those who have gone before me I neither have the desire nor the right to speak for longer than forty-five minutes, and I do not intend to speak for that length of time. But I do have some concerns, Mr. Speaker, as a member of this House, not having been a member very long. I want to try and articulate those concerns as best I can during the period that I have. In one way I am happy that the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) went before me, because he did, in some ways, talk about some of the things that are of concern to me. As an elected member of the House, having been elected just a year and a few months ago, it is probably one of the most difficult periods in Newfoundland's history, or in recent history anyway, for a person to be involved in public life. There is no doubt that the demands being made on members of the Legislature, and on ministers

Mr. White.

of the government, are greater now than they have been in a long, long time. I, like the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) and others, am concerned about the financial position of the Province. I have to confess I am not that much aware of exactly the kinds, or where the Province is in terms of its finances. I was rather

MR. WHITE: surprised when the Premier spoke on opening day and referred to the possibility, or inferred of the possibility, of the next three years the Bank of Canada becoming involved or three provinces or several provinces would essentially just fade out of the picture.

So then, as the Minister of Mines and Energy said when he was replying for the government to the non-confidence motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, that we have to be, as members, concerned about the situation the Province is in and hopefully go back to our constituencies and tell our constituents exactly what kind of position the Province is in, why they cannot get water and sewer projects, why they cannot get road projects, and why we should not be putting great demands on government for various things.

But I maintain, Mr. Speaker, if the government expects us to do this as elected representatives, all of us in this Chamber, Government and Opposition, then they have to be fair to all members and to all districts and to all people in Newfoundland. Fair!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. WHITE: I am going to demonstrate, Mr. Speaker, in the next little while, one of the most unfair examples of partisan, political decision making that has gone on in Newfoundland in a long, long time and it is too bad that we have to do this. It is too bad that we have to do this, Mr. Speaker, because as the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) said, it might be better for all concerned if we could stand in this House and discuss the problems in Newfoundland without having to criticize and be strong in our words of criticism in respect of the government.

Now I represent a district of about twenty-two communities, twenty-one or twenty-two communities, some of them are joined together, we have separate names and so on, so it is

MR. WHITE: about twenty-one or twenty-two communities. Shortly after I got elected in September, 1975, a lot of the town councils within weeks were coming to me saying they had commitments for this and they had commitments for that and they had commitments for something else. Just about every community had a commitment of something or other. In some cases they had telegrams of commitments saying the tenders would be called and so on. In the case of one community, tenders were actually called and the lowest bidder had been notified, and in another case the tender was due to appear in the paper.

So that is fine, Then the Prime Minister went on television in October, Thanksgiving Day, and announced the wage and price controls and so on. And then the Premier, who was in Ottawa at the time came back and announced it and so on. So that was fine, and I went back and told my people, "Look we are in hard times, do not expect to get your water and sewer projects this Summer, and do not expect to get it for a while. It is difficult times, a three year programme." And I was quite prepared to do that and this was my excuse every time, "Well why do you not get on the air, and go after them, and fight, and get in the House and ballyrag them and criticize them because they will not approve our water and sewer projects or our road projects?"

And I said, "Well we cannot do that. We have to be a little bit sensible about this. We have to be somewhat responsible about this because the Province is in hard times and we are going to cut back on all those projects." Well that was fine. But then we find out that in cutting back on those projects, the government does a very bad thing in my estimation and Mr. Speaker, I quite frankly do not want to be associated with politics in this Province. -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Could I interrupt? Could we have a few more members come in?

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, what I was going to say is that then we were told that the government was going to go about to decide what projects would go ahead during the fiscal year 1976-77 and what would be cancelled. So first I have a list here, Mr. Speaker, of the water and sewer projects and other grants to municipal councils in Newfoundland that were turned down last year. Now this is the list that was tabled by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and I took the time to go through this list, to count the number of projects that were refused and turned down and to find out in what districts they were. And I find out that we have a total of about fifty projects, Mr. Speaker, and of that forty projects are in Liberal districts, or-districts represented on this side of the House, and ten in districts on the other side of the House.

AN HON. MEMBER: What?

Mr. White:

Now that is the water and/or sewer projects not approved in 1976, forty in Liberal districts and ten in P.C. districts. Now right here, Mr. Speaker, I have a list of projects that were approved, sixty-two projects altogether that were approved, and the ones that were approved in districts represented by government members, I think it is about six, no about fifty-four or fifty-five, and the ones that were turned down - or the ones that were approved in Liberal districts was about seven or eight.

Here we have a case, Mr. Speaker, of blatant partisan politics being used directly - no doubt about it, there is proof there of it - in terms of giving out grants to municipalities in Newfoundland. Now when I got into politics I thought that, you know, we would all be treated equally. I went and started to work with the municipal councils in my area, in many cases I had to encourage them on occasion to increase their municipal service fee. I have often talked with them about how they can get more revenue in. I have sat down with them and planned out different projects. In one community, Mr. Speaker, we actually raised enough money to put in an artesian well by having walkatons and so on, a town council actually did that. So I come into elected office, come into politics, come in here, hear the Premier announce that no money to do anything this year, few projects will go ahead, but not very many, a halt to all capital spending in Newfoundland, and then find out that the projects that were approved, the sixty-two projects that approved, ninety-odd per cent of them were in Tory districts, and of the fifty or so that were refused, ninety-six or ninety-seven per cent were in Liberal districts.

AN HON. MEMBER: They were ongoing.

MR. WHITE: Just a moment. They were the same as the others. They were exactly the same as the others.

AN HON. MEMBER: They were ongoing.

MR. WHITE: No, they were not. They were exactly the same as the others, Mr. Speaker, and I know this. If they were ongoing, Mr. Speaker, how come they were ongoing only in districts represented by other members in this Chamber?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WHITE: And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SIMMONS: Skulduggery! Well you know it, skulduggery, boy!

MR. WHITE: It is pure skulduggery, Mr. Speaker!

MR. SIMMONS: Political promises.

MR. WHITE: Pure partisan, political decision-making.

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order has come up.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: With a cup of coffee, which is out of order, using phrases that he just used, I think he should withdraw out of respect for, if not the House, certainly the people in the gallery.

MR. MURPHY: Skulduggery, you cannot -

MR. SIMMONS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, if it is that. My colleague from Lewisporte (Mr. White) is making some excellent points, and I can understand the member from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) wants to try and get him off stride. Well first of all, he is not going to.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Secondly, on the point of order, Mr. Speaker, there is no rule against bringing tea into this House, it is not the worse thing that has been in here. There is no rule against it at all. And number two, Mr. Speaker, if it is unparliamentary I will withdraw the term I used, the terms in describing this scandalous state of affairs my colleague as just described, I called it political prostitution, if it is out of order I will withdraw it, but I will continue to believe it.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from Kilbride.

MR. WELLS: I think the whole question of the point of order is not that the member from Lewisporte has not the right to say what - he is speaking, he is on his feet, it is he who should speak, and we are listening to him, those of us who are here, and listening with interest. But the whole thing of this point of order is to let him speak, and not to have other people standing around various parts of

Mr. Wells:

the Chamber interjecting. That is what is unfortunate. That is what is causing much of the problem in this House.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, if I may respond to the member from Kilbride. It is obvious why he is no longer the government House leader. The member for Grand Falls rose and said that I had said something which was unparliamentary. I spoke to that point of order. If there is another one about interruptions I will be prepared to speak to that. As I understand the member for Grand Falls, he alleges that something that I have said is unparliamentary. I submit it is not, but I have given, Mr. Speaker, my undertaking that if it is I will gladly withdraw it.

MR. SPEAKER: Well I think the point made by the hon. member from Kilbride certainly bears repetition from the Chair, and that is when an hon. member is speaking and other hon. members on other sides engage in what starts off as light repartee soon ends in a general atmosphere of disorder which is neither to the benefit of an hon. member speaking or any hon. members who are endeavouring to hear him, and certainly something which all hon. members should refrain from doing.

MR. SPEAKER: with respect to the specific words to which objection was taken, actually I had originally thought it was something the hon. the member for Lewisporte (Mr. White) had said, but apparently that is not the case, It is something the hon. the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) had said which I did not hear and which he had no right to say, not matter what they were, because he was not in his seat and he was not recognized. I would suggest we leave it at that, unless any hon. member insists on a ruling and I shall have to find out precisely what was said.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, if I may. I was going to arise, but the word I objected to was political "skulduggery" on the part of the member for Lewisporte (Mr. White). I do not think "skulduggery" is a word that is acceptable in parliament. That was my point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: As I say, that was what I thought objection was taken to, but I understand that is not the case, that it was a different term.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Mr. Speaker, I was referring to the hon. gentleman and his unparliamentary behaviour of standing in the doorway, using phraseology he has now repeated from his seat, which I think was somewhat unparliamentary. It is not something that has not been heard about before.

The second thing that I did object to, and I still object to, Your Honour, again I will be guided by the Chair in any ruling, but I have understood that the bringing in of tea and beverages and things like that is not acceptable in the Chamber, not because there is anything wrong with a cup of tea or anything like that, but this adds to the lack of decorum and does not show the proper respect for parliament. This is parliament and I would like to hope that even if it is parliamentary to bring in your cup of tea and have a swig, that the hon. members would -

MR. SIMMONS: A swig of tea?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: - a swig of anything. - that the hon. members would, Your Honour, considered it to be not the proper kind of thing for us to be doing in the Chamber and would refrain from doing it in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, the point certainly is clarified because I had originally thought that the point of order arose, as far as words were concerned, as far as what was said was concerned, arose with respect to what the hon. the member for Lewisporte (Mr. White) was saying. That is not the case and obviously the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir's - whatever he said - words were out of order because he was not in his place or recognized by the Chair.

With respect to bringing beverages into the House, I am not going to make a specific ruling on that. If necessary I will, but it certainly has been my understanding that people have not, to my knowledge, consumed other than water in the House.

MR. SIMMONS: To your knowledge?

MR. SPEAKER: To my knowledge. So I would assume that has been a kind of agreement in the House.

The hon. the member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I hope this little interruption is taken into consideration in case I do get down to forty-five minutes.

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, we have been called upon as members of this House to try and appreciate the position we find ourselves in as a Province and to try and articulate and explain that position to our constituents. The latest hon. member to mention that was the Minister of Mines and Energy, the member for Green Bay (Mr. Peckford), when he said, Instead of crying out for water and sewer projects all the time go back and explain to the people that we are in this kind of situation. Well I did that until I saw what was going on. I was pointing out at the time, Mr. Speaker, that of all the

MR. WHITE: projects going on in Newfoundland last year, the two lists that I have, the capital projects 1976 - 1977, guaranteed loans, sixty-two projects and seven or eight, or eight or nine out of all those projects totalling \$21 million were in Liberal districts and the remainder of those sixty-two projects were in P.C. districts in Newfoundland. And of the water and/or sewer projects and other government projects going ahead, not approved in 1976, out of the fifty projects, forty that were cancelled were in Liberal districts and ten that were given the go-ahead were in P.C. districts.

Now, Mr. Speaker, maybe this is the way politics work. If you are in office for a term of four or five years that during that term, if you are a minister, you try to get as much for the districts that support your government, and so on, as you can get. We have very little precedent for this, because for twenty-three years in this Province, there were hardly any rural seats represented on the Opposition side, and consequently one could not take the examples that I have given today because in those days the Opposition members came from St. John's and - most of them - and there were very few cases of government actually getting involved to the extent that they would in rural Newfoundland.

What I am saying is that maybe this system is the system in this Province. Maybe it is -

MR. MURPHY: Are you suggesting that St. John's does not count?

MR. WHITE: Oh, St. John's counts, of course it counts! St. John's counts. But all I am saying, Mr. Speaker - and if the member would listen - what I am saying is that for twenty-three years we did not have the kinds of examples we have today where we all represent rural seats. There are more on this side than there are on that side.

MR. PECKFORD: Would the hon. member permit a question?

MR. WHITE: No, Mr. Speaker, not at the moment. He did not - I should not say he, Mr. Speaker, that is not proper - but I recall when the minister was speaking, the member for Stephenville (Mr. McNeil) wanted to put a question and he would not permit it so neither will I.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WHITE: So, Mr. Speaker, there we have an example of partisan political decision making, not decision making based on the populace of this Province, the needs of the populace of this Province, but based on sheer politics and where the votes are going to come from and so on.

Now, Mr. Speaker, even that I could accept. Okay! Even that I could accept. Fine, no problem there if that is the way the system works. Most of my constituents have come to see that that is the way the system works. They say, "Freeman, boy, you are in Opposition, you know, and you are not going to get much for the district at least out of the provincial government. You will get lots out of Ottawa," as I will demonstrate later on. "But you are not going to get much. But, you know, there will be another election sometime and then we will have another go at it." I do not believe it is very good politics to be doing this, Mr. Speaker, because how are the people in rural Newfoundland represented by us over here going to react, Mr. Speaker, in three years time when another election comes. They are going to say, "Hold!". There will be no such thing then as government candidates because there will be no government candidates at that stage. Both of us will have equal opportunity to get in government.

So then I accepted that. Okay. Fine. No problem. The boys are going to -

MR. PECKFORD: Of all the things down in Municipal Affairs that did not come out was the political patronage on the side of the Liberal districts.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I just demonstrated. And those are lists that were given me by the then Minister of Municipal Affairs. So, you know, I will talk a little later about some of the figures and some of the -

AN HON. MEMBER: The hon. minister's figures.

MR. WHITE: That is right, some of the minister's figures that he gave in his speech, if I get down to that. But, Mr. Speaker, I accepted that. I said fine. The boys are in, they are in Cabinet and they are going to pork barrel their own districts. That is fine, no problem there. I will accept that and I will do whatever I can working with the town councils and other people, and working with Ottawa and our federal MP who is doing a great job, to try and get what I can for my area. That is fine. And I went back and explained to the people, look you know there is not much going on. The Province is in bad financial straits. The Premier has been on television announcing this great austerity programme and so on.

But then there were a few by-elections called last year. I am not going to talk very much about the by-elections except to demonstrate that once again this was riveted home, the political decision making based on politics and votes was riveted home once again when we saw water and sewer projects going ahead in Exploits district and in Gambo district, and then a lot of the people of my district were saying, "Well Freeman, boy, resign and we will get some projects going then." I said, yes it seems like the only way to do it is have a by-election and things are going.

But all I am trying to point out, Mr. Speaker - and I hope the ministers concerned will understand the kind of positions that we are placed in, I hope they appreciate it because there may come a time when they will be in similar positions - that time may not come - but there may come a time when they will be in similar positions. But what I want to emphasize is that if they expect us, Mr. Speaker, the ministers

MR. WHITE:

of this government expect us to go back to our districts and sell the austerity programme and sell the financial problems of the Province and not be coming at them for commitments, is to at least be fair, try to be fair and make a decision on the basis of need rather than on the basis of which district or who represents the district. I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is one of the most important things we have to decide in politics.

We are coming into a new era of politics, an era when we are trying to develop some kind of political morality in this Province, and yet we find this thing staring us in the face, day after day after day. I quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, am not so sure that I want to go down the road for a long period of time and be associated with that kind of thing. It bothers me a great deal and I hope that we can see a change in this kind of policy because if we do, then, you know, I can assure the members opposite that I will do my best to explain to my constituents that things are difficult in this period of time in our life and that we will try our best to explain to our people that things are not as rosy as they were in years gone by. So I hope that that change comes about if not in the heads of the members opposite, then hopefully in the hearts of members opposite.

Mr. White.

Mr. Speaker, I want to get on to a similar kind of thing. It is attached to the same thing that I was just mentioning, but it is not necessarily zeroed in on the members opposite, it is zeroed in the whole kind of thing that is developing in Newfoundland. Last year, when the serious water problems were occurring in St. John's, it was almost a national disaster. You know, St. John's is going to be out of water. We are going to have to, you know, go for a half a day, and, you know, Mr. Speaker, it was absolutely ridiculous. If the people in St. John's, who on occasion do not have much opportunity to visit some of the rural areas of this Province, could see the kind of water problems that exists in rural Newfoundland, the problem that they were suffering in St. John's was miniscule compared to it, Mr. Speaker. I maintain that in some parts of this Province - and great strides have been made, there is no doubt about that - in some parts of this Province the water that people are drinking, Mr. Speaker, is not fit for human consumption. Now I am not saying to this government, "Come on, give us, you know, a \$3 million water and sewer project," that just went ahead in Norris Arm in my own district. That project has been just about completed now. It is a massive project, and it is a great project, and fine. But there is another project in my district,

But there is another project in my district, Mr. Speaker, that went ahead that I would like to tell members about, and I know there are several similar to this in Green Bay, but this particular project was put in at a cost of about \$25,000, and now today every single person in that community is hooked up to the water.

MR. PECKFORD: Where is this?

MR. WHITE: That is Port Albert. Port Albert, Mr. Speaker, is -

MR. PECKFORD: Is Loon Bay in your district?

MR. WHITE: Loon Bay, as well, is similar.

But the difference in the Loon Bay project and the Port Albert project is that the Port Albert project was a LIP project,

Mr. White.

and that is what I was going to demonstrate. But in Port Albert, Mr. Speaker, the people there, about fifty families, forty-five or fifty families, they applied for a LIP project on the basis of putting in water, and they did. And, you know, what they did in the middle of the Winter? They took pick and shovel and dug lines from a pond to the community, and around the community for three miles by pick and shovel. They put in a pump house, and got the materials from the Water Services Division of the Department of Municipal Affairs, which I think is one of the better divisions in the Department of Municipal Affairs - and I want to talk about that during this session. It is a good thing if we were all treated properly with respect to it. But today in Port Albert by people taking the initiative, getting a little bit of money to pay, you know, a minimum wage to guys who wanted to be paid, a lot of guys did it for nothing, and they through sheer determination put in a water project and they have their own septic tanks, of course, and they are all separated, the septic tanks below the water lines and all this kind of thing. It is all balanced out with help from the Department of Health people. So this is the kind of thing that we have to do more of in Newfoundland. And what I want to say in connection with that, Mr. Speaker, is that while times are hard, while times are difficult, there is not much money available, surely we can sit down, as a group - the government I am talking about - can sit down and say, "Well, look what can we do? Can we take \$5 million or \$4 million or \$3 million and start putting in a lot of artesian wells or do something?"

Mr. Speaker, I got communities in my district that do not even have one single artesian well, not one, there are communities. And, you know, that is absolutely scandalous. The member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) said the other day that he had to bring water before he came here into this House. There are people in rural Newfoundland who are bringing water every single day, and half of it is not fit to drink, and in some cases they are drinking their own

Mr. White.

waste, and it is a national scandal, and surely we have got to come to grips with this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WHITE: And last year, how upset I was when all this talk about the great urgent need for water in St. John's. And the press were out every day with cameras filming it, and everybody on the radio talking about a national disaster was going to occur if people in St. John's could not take a bath. I mean what a disaster it was going to be. They could not wash their cars! They could not water their lawns! And they could not go for a swim! And yet we did not even have enough water to drink. Now it might sound petty in the overall problems of things, Mr. Speaker, it might sound petty in the terms of the overall situation, but all I am saying is that if one-tenth of the publicity last Summer were given to the water problems of rural Newfoundland, there would have been a lot more done about it than has been done. And I maintain - and I am going to say this, Mr. Speaker, because I have been thinking about it for a long time - too much originates in St. John's, too much decision making is in St. John's,

MR. WHITE: there is too much media saturation in St. John's compared with outside St. John's, and we have to start thinking a little more about the other parts of this Province that do not live in St. John's, and it is about time that we all did as a group, and I think we are some semblance of that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I can go on about this problem for days. I can talk about the centralization of power in St. John's, the centralization of control in St. John's. If a constituent of mine wants a piece of Crown land surveyed - or not surveyed, but wants somebody from Crown Lands to come out, how long does it take; somebody from Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, I think there are one or two in Central Newfoundland. It is about time the whole structure were changed, Mr. Speaker. We are entitled in our area of Newfoundland to the same level of service in terms of government assistance and government attention as they are in St. John's and on the Avalon Peninsula. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that the quicker this is done the better for all concerned. The feeling of alienation might be in Labrador, but the feeling of alienation off the Avalon Peninsula, Mr. Speaker, is growing daily and the quicker we react and do something about the centralization of power the better for all concerned.

Every time I hear somebody talking about building another building to house civil servants in St. John's, there are lots of other places in Newfoundland to build buildings to house civil servants without in St. John's.

So I would like to see the minister direct themselves to this, and I know a lot of them have come from rural areas of the Province just as I do, and I hope that they do spend some time looking at this particular problem.

MR. PECKFORD: Will do.

MR. WHITE: Good.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, like I said earlier, I thought, you know, that last year after those two particular examples that I gave of projects that were approved and projects that were deferred or cancelled altogether, I thought that that would stop until I saw this list come out the other day on this \$2 million job creation programme.

Now I am not going to be very hard on this particular minister because I am not sure if all the areas he has listed are the ones that have the highest number of social assistance receivers in this Province. But out of all those projects that were approved the other day only three or four again went to Liberal districts. Now I do not know if that was deliberate. I suspect it might have been.

SOME HON. MEMBER: Oh! Oh!

MR. WHITE: I do not know. I am just looking at some figures. That is all I am looking at. I do not know if this was deliberate, Mr. Speaker, but all I do know, Mr. Speaker, that there are places in my district where Social Services people could be employed doing projects that would be far better than ski-doo trails in Grand Falls. For instance, Mr. Speaker -

MR. ROBERTS: That is an indication of priorities, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WHITE: Well there are not very many welfare recipients left in my district, I must say. I have got to say that. I was not surprised when I did not get a project from Social Assistance. I was not a bit surprised because we got the place saturated with federal money, saturated.

Mr. Speaker, the other day when the Minister of Mines and Energy was speaking, he talked a couple of points that I want to bring up and mention. He talked about the LIP mentality in this Province. And I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a bit of that developing, the LIP mentality, and after what I have been saying for the last ten or fifteen

MR. WHITE: minutes concerning the lack of provincial money going into the kinds of districts represented on this side of the House, then how can you help but get the LIP mentality and go after every single federal dollar that comes into this Province.

Now just after I got elected I talked to the Minister of Mines and Energy, who has been a long time friend, about this particular matter of LIP projects and I did not agree with the way it was being done. I still do not particularly agree with the way it is being done. There should be a little more consultation with the provincial government, where the money is going to be spent, how they can help out, and that kind of thing.

But, Mr. Speaker, after seeing the way they spend money in this Province -

MR. H. COLLINS: How is it done? Would the hon. member tell us how it is done?

MR. WHITE: Yes, all through your kinds of districts, that is where the money goes. That is what I am talking about.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, what I want to say is that I am not in favour of the federal government giving control of the expenditure of LIP funds to this government as long as they demonstrate this kind of a way of spending it. And that is all I want to say about that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. WHITE: Now the Minister of Mines and Energy has talked about six out of ten, he said, six out of ten LIP projects, six out of ten, that is sixty per cent of LIP projects are failures or are not completed.

Well I decided I would check this out, Mr. Speaker, and I did, and I was informed that when the programme came into being, back in 1970-71

MR. WHITE: 1970-1971, I think it was, that the percentage of not non-completed projects, projects that were not quite completed, was somewhere less than 50 per cent. Now that is shocking! Almost 50 per cent of projects not completed. That is when the project came out. The minister said six out of ten, and I am told now by job creation people, and I want to point this out to correct the figures and so on, that that has been narrowed down to less than 10 per cent. That is what I am told. That is not too bad, Mr. Speaker, in view of the - I would like to know what the failure in Rural Development is compared to what the failure in LIP is, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PECKFORD: Oh, between twenty-five, thirty forty or fifty per cent.

MR. WHITE: The Minister of Mines and Energy also mentioned, when he was speaking, another little matter in connection with LIP and Rural Development and so on, that more Rural Development grants went to members on this side of the House. I should point out to him that, yes, that may be so but it is also a fact that this side of the House represents more rural districts, we should bring that to mind, about twenty to fourteen, I think it is, so naturally it could follow from that. But there is another thing, Mr. Speaker, as long as there is a programme that this government has, I am going to be trying to get out of it what I can for my constituents. I am going to try all I can. Now I still disagree with keeping the names secret. I disagree with that on principle. Let us have the names, let us discuss them. But I say, as long as there are any programmes offered by this government, despite how hard it is to get at them, I am going to go after them with all the might and force I have. So I will say that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WHITE: Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to give the federal government a little bit of credit here today. It is not

MR. WHITE: part of a LIP mentality, Mr. Speaker, but I want to demonstrate how fair the federal government is in Newfoundland compared to how Newfoundland's own government is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WHITE: We have this year coming into this Province a total of \$20 million, almost \$21 million, in LIP funds. Almost \$21 million in LIP funds. That is a fair chunk of money, but I am sure we deserve it and it should be coming in from Ottawa and more if we can get it.

Now in Bonavista-Trinity-Conception, that is a Liberal riding, I suppose it is, I am not sure sometimes, there is this year \$2,780,000 coming into Newfoundland, 679 jobs.

Burin-Burgeo, the biggest Liberal riding, less than \$1 million.

AN HON. MEMBER: They got it all, sure.

MR. WHITE: That is right, they got it all. Gander-Twillingate; \$3,290,000, 718 jobs. Another Liberal riding.

Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador; 718 jobs, \$2.5 million.

Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe; a Tory seat, \$5 million in LIP funds. \$5 million, Mr. Speaker, \$5 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WHITE: So, Mr. Speaker, it shows the fairness of the Liberal Government in Ottawa compared to the unfairness of the government in this Province. I think that should be demonstrated, Mr. Speaker, once and for all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, let me give you an example of the kinds of things that I, as a member of a constituency in Newfoundland, working with our federal M.P., who is a great fellow, a great fellow -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. WHITE: I think Mr. George Baker is one of the better M.P's in this Province. I suppose I should not compare him like that, but he is one of the better M.P's that we have ever seen in Gander-Twillingate bar none. I would have to say that. He gives complete attention to his riding, visits his riding every single weekend, although his family is in Ottawa. I must say that he is doing a good job and I appreciate it.

In my district, Mr. Speaker, look at the projects we have going, great projects: Town hall in Little Burnt Bay, town hall in Birchy Bay, in Comfort Cove-Newstead there is a major wharf going in in connection with the seal thing we heard about a couple of days ago and the other projects that are being carried out by Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation. All throughout the area, Mr. Speaker, community stages, all the kinds of things that the Minister of Mines and Energy said that his \$2 million programme was going to do but LIP did not do. I maintain there is a lot of difference in a community stage going into my district, Mr. Speaker, a lot of difference in a town hall that will serve the people, although it is not resource based or anything like that, but this major wharf project and others are resource based, There is a lot of difference in that, Mr. Speaker, and ski-doo trails.

MR. MORGAN: What about all the road work out there?

MR. WHITE: Oh, we did well in road work. I have to give the minister credit, we did well. We got fifteen miles of pavement, I think. I certainly do not expect that to go on forever.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned a minute ago that I have looked at some of the things that the Minister of Mines and Energy talked about in his speech. I made a few notes as he was going along. Now one of the things he said,

Mr. White:

and I just want to bring this out, I hope that the minister did not mislead the House, I hope that he had figures, but probably he will speak some other time and tell me where he got his figures because I cannot quite match them up. He said, and I am quoting now, Tape 119, page 351 of this particular Hansard, "The Conference Board of Canada tells in its release that Newfoundland's real domestic growth in 1977, Mr. Speaker, is 4.3 per cent." Now I have some figures from the Conference Board of Canada right here, the Conference Board in Canada forecast for key provincial economic indicator.

MR. SMALLWOOD: What did he say the percentage was?

MR. WHITE: That is a quote from the Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. SMALLWOOD: What did he say it was?

MR. WHITE: 4.3 per cent.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Of what?

MR. WHITE: That the Conference Board of Canada tells us in its release that Newfoundland's real domestic growth in 1977 is 4.3 per cent.

MR. PECKFORD: There are two boards.

MR. WHITE: Yes, yes, yes! And I have here that the Conference Board of Canada - did you say there is a difference in two boards?

MR. PECKFORD: Two boards with almost the same name.

MR. WHITE: I see. Well we will have to get that straightened out as we go along. But, Mr. Speaker, in The Globe And Mail of January 29, 1977, the Conference Board of Canada forecast a gross rate of 2.9 per cent for Newfoundland in 1977, 2.9 per cent almost half of what the Minister of Mines and Energy told us that the Conference Board of Canada tells in its release. So I do not know. - Well if it is two different boards I would like for someone to explain where -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: They are the same boards.

MR. WHITE: They are the same boards. Yes, of course, it is the same board. So I do not know where the minister got his figures, I

MR. White:

am not going to say -

MR. ROBERTS: - The hon. gentleman should explain or apologize.

MR. WHITE: I am not going to say he gave the wrong figures or anything like that, but I think, you know, it should be clarified for all concerned. 4.3 per cent he said, and right here the figures say that it is going to be, in The Globe and Mail, the Conference Board of Canada forecast the gross rate of 2.9 per cent for Newfoundland in 1977. And the Minister of Mines and Energy also stated that Newfoundland is doing as well as the rest of the country, according to the Conference Board forecast. The fact is the Conference Board projects a national average domestic growth of 3.1 per cent. Newfoundland is the lowest among the Atlantic Provinces. Nova Scotia 3.8 per cent, P.E.I. 3 per cent, New Brunswick 3.6 per cent.

So I just wanted to make sure that we had those figures cleared up, Mr. Speaker, because the Minister of Mines and Energy was obviously the best the government could put up, he was the chosen one to be put up by the government to react to the non-confidence motion. So I think we should look at this, and make sure the figures are correct and so on.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of more things I want to put to rest. With respect to the \$2 million programme that the government announced a few days ago or a few weeks ago, you know, it is almost an investment, Mr. Speaker, for the government. I am told - people in my district have been phoning me looking for jobs by the score, and I have been telling them to phone whichever -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. WHITE: Oh, there is still a few left, there is still a few left.

MR. ROBERTS: They want to work.

MR. WHITE: I have been telling them, you know, to get in touch with So-and-So, and only social services people are being taken on. So what the government are doing of course is forcing 500 people off the social services rolls, they are going to save themselves almost \$2 million in social services during the next year, and they are going to force them on the federal government in terms of

Mr. White:

unemployment insurance. So the system is there. I am not saying anything about the system, I am just explaining what the system is. We will spend \$2 million to get them off the social services rolls and to force them on the federal government, and then we will save however much it is going to cost in terms of social services during the next year, and at the same time we will force them on the federal government, and let the federal government look after their upkeep.

Now if I were sitting over there, Mr. Speaker, if I were sitting over there and had to figure out a way to save some money, would I do the same? Probably I would. But I think the people should be made aware of the system that the provincial government are getting into, and so on. I do not have much time left do I? Well that is too bad, I have not even started yet.

Mr. Speaker, seeing that I am running out of time I want to get into one more little bit of something that has been irking me for a long time, I wanted to talk about the joint ventures, I wanted to talk about the Change Islands ferry problem that we have heard so much about, but I am just going to talk about, right now, Mr. Speaker, a little pet peeve of mine because I saw it develop and that is Information Services, Mr. Speaker. Nobody has said anything in the last little while about Information Services, that marvelous arm of government that shoots out propoganda on a daily basis from this administration. And I want to put to rest one fallacy that exist in respect of the dissemination of information by Information Services.

Information Services, Mr. Speaker, are located on the first floor of this building and their main aim is to give out government information,

MR. WHITE:

information coming from the government. We were also told, Mr. Speaker, that members of this side of the House, including the Leader of the Opposition, could release material through Information Services. And we find out to our dismay that there is a - what was his name? Goebbels was it? Hitler's propaganda man.

MR. ROBERTS: Goebbels.

MR. WHITE: Yes, Goebbels. You know Mr. Dave Butler is almost as bad as that. I have to say it. Because he edits everything that comes downstairs. And, Mr. Speaker, I do not think the government is aware of this. They should be made aware of it and they should look into it because it is a dangerous thing to have a man with this kind of power working for the administration.

The Minister of Public Works I think is responsible for it, has not laid down any criteria with respect to what releases will go, how they are supposed to be written up, or what those releases contain. For instance, they have scrapped every release that has been sent down from this side of the House that ever mentions a government department or a minister. They will not release anything that mentions from the Opposition a government department or a minister.

Now some of them are not overly critical. Some releases say that, you know, the member for Lewisporte (Mr. White) says that he has been consulting with the Minister of Transportation and Communications on such and such. That will not go. They are not allowed to refer to anybody. So we got to the stage, Mr. Speaker, where we just could not do this. They told us downstairs that the same treatment was given to us as was given to members opposite. Okay? Now, Mr. Speaker, you know the word 'Liberal', for instance, oh my, you put the word 'Liberal' in a press release, 'the Liberal MHA', it had to come out. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I have here in front of me one of the most blatant forms of political propaganda, not government propaganda - that is what they are down for, to send out government propaganda - but listen to this, listen to the political propaganda that Information Services sends out.

"The following is a statement issued today, June 8, by Premier Frank

MR. WHITE:

Moore with respect to his early calling of three provincial by-elections in Newfoundland." He goes on to talk about that he is going to call the three by-elections in Ferryland and so on as they have had long enough without representation and so on. "I do not think that is good politics and I do not think it is good government. The fact is that at the present time we are asking the people of the Province to back the government member." Okay, Mr. Speaker. "We are asking the people of this Province to back the government member, the person who is running for the government."

He is not running for the government, Mr. Speaker, he is running for the P.C. Party. Now if we have to have our kids growing up in this day and age -

MR. MORGAN: Which party is in power today?

MR. WHITE: The administration is a Tory -

MR. MORGAN: Which party?

MR. WHITE: I know which party is in power. And, Mr. Speaker, "The P.C. Party is the government party, now and will remain so for the next four years. We think the priorities we have as a government" - that is not too bad but to put in, "The P.C. Party is the government party," Mr. Speaker, that is sheer propaganda. Information Services should not be allowed to send it out. If it is going to be there as we were told, that both sides can send information out through Information Services, then there should be some kind of policy laid down by the minister responsible for Information Services that says what can go and what cannot go. I ask the minister to do something like that, Mr. Speaker, so that Dave Butler will not have the authority to edit stuff from government and stuff from the Opposition. He is the only man, and he is not an elected representative, he is not a minister, he is not anything, and yet he has the power to decide what government sends out, what Opposition sends out and what is not sent out.

So I say to the Minister of Public Works and Services, I think that is where Information Services comes under, but what it costs the people of this Province we do not know.

MR. ROBERTS: Remember Mr. Butler's role in the election.

MR. WHITE: Oh, I remember Mr. Butler's role in the election. The people of Newfoundland do as well. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, the cost of Information Services - I remember the great cry about the Newfoundland Bulletin there when the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) was the Premier, the Newfoundland Bulletin and how they scrapped it, how the member for St. John's Center fired Jack Fitzgérald and fired Bob Cousins the day he got in.

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

I do have to call to the hon. member's attention that his time has lapsed. So if he could terminate -

MR. SMALLWOOD: By leave? By leave?

MR. WHITE: One minute, Mr. Speaker, is all I need.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has requested one minute. Is that given by leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

MR. WHITE: All I want to point out is that it is hard in the estimates and in the statement of public accounts to find out what Information Services is costing the people of Newfoundland. I just want to point this out. It comes under general administration in the Department of Public Works and Services and it is all tied in together and we can figure out the salaries. That comes to I think it is \$102,000 for salaries for Information Services. But it is not broken down. It is only in general administration in the Department of Public Works and Services and I think it should be a separate head if we could ever get to that stage. That is it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. Collins): The hon. member for Kilbride.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, I would like, in opening my remarks, to give a word of welcome to the new members who have come into the House. My seat mate here at the moment is not with us, and the same the member for Ferryland (Mr. O'Brien) is outside the door. My friend the member for Bonavista North (Mr. Cross) is there. And certainly I would like to express a welcome on behalf of myself, and, of course, all of us to these new members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS: I must say I had a certain interest in the decisive victory of the member for Bonavista North. I went down there one time, as some members who recall these campaigns will remember, it was a great learning experience. I see the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) over there. He was down around there while I was there. It was, for me, a tremendous learning experience about politics. I was defeated.

MR. ROBERTS: That did no harm.

MR. WELLS: Yes, a great thing. This is good for a person every now and then in politics. I do not envy those who perhaps have been in this House who have never been defeated in a political contest, because there is a great, good learning experience, and the people of Bonavista North made their decision and so be it. But I do think that in a sense, I played a little part in paving the way for the victory that eventually came in the way of the present member for Bonavista North (Mr. Cross).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS: And so I suppose in a sense it is an especial delight on my part to see him here.

MR. SIMMONS: It showed real discrimination.

MR. WELLS: Perhaps it did now. Now the hon. member need not get snarky, you know. It is dangerous to tangle with the man who is on his feet. It is unwise.

AN HON. MEMBER: Depending who the man is.

MR. WELLS: Depending who the man is. And the hon. member knows full well who the man is, and it is dangerous to interrupt too far and to tangle too much with the man on his feet. I must say that the member for Ferryland (Mr. O'Brien) is back in his seat now. It is unfortunate - not unfortunate in the political sense, but I am not being political now - it is unfortunate in a personal sense when a man finds himself a member of this House, that an election perhaps is in dispute and before the courts. This, whoever it is, does not matter. It imposes a strain and a burden on the man, because he is not sure if he is a member or not. And in that sense we all sympathize with the member for Ferryland. I do hope that whatever the outcome of that particular matter that is before the court, I do hope that while he is the member for Ferryland, - he may remain so, I do not know - but I do hope we hear from him, and hear his maiden speech in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear,hear!

MR. WELLS: Now I am going to have something to say, and I am glad in a sense that it is late in the afternoon, and we seem to be all here, and I do not particularly want to be partisan. It is tempting to sort of reply to some of the speeches that went before this afternoon, particularly the speech immediately preceding me. But what I want to do is talk to the members of the House this afternoon, not in a partisan sense, but as colleagues in the House. And there are various matters that I would like to touch on in these few remarks. I would like to make reference to my district, but I will not do so first off. I would like to make reference to fishing matters, as a layman in fishing matters, and particularly to talk about joint ventures, which, I think, is something that is deserving of the most careful debate and examination in this House. I would also like to talk about labour matters. It is perhaps inopportune, I think, to discuss labour matters in this House this afternoon when you have strikes, as it were, all over the place. Labrador, a very serious matter. The

Mr. Wells.

Waterford Hospital, a very, very serious matter. And notwithstanding what the previous speech said about St. John's, a very serious matter that the municipal workers are out on strike. I will not deal with these this afternoon, but I hope we will have an opportunity during this session to deal at some length and in some detail with labour matters. They are very, very necessary, I think, to be dealt with and deserving of our consideration. I would say this in just one comment only, because I do not want to inflame any situation, but I will make one comment and pass on, that the time has come, I believe, when we have got to debate whether or not there should be strikes in the public service. I do not want to take a position now. I do not want to take a position in any way, but it is very serious. It is very important, and I would hate this session to end without our considering it, considering it carefully, quietly, not in a hot-blooded way - it is too important for that - but really have we not got

MR. WELLS: to the point, Mr. Speaker, when strikes in the public service are counter productive, when another way ought to be found to resolve these differences. I will say no more about it at this moment, but it is something to which we have I think to address ourselves very seriously. We have to address ourselves very seriously also to the issues raised by the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall), financial matters facing this Province, political contributions, how they should be regulated, how election expenses should be regulated, all these things, the Linerboard Mill and what is going to happen to it? What is going to happen to Come By Chance, although that may well be beyond the control of this Legislature, and this Legislature in reactivating Come By Chance, if it can be reactivated, may only play a peripheral role because the figures are so large there that there is nobody dare suggest that this government can step in and put Come By Chance back on its feet, because it cannot. But these are the sort of things that are deserving of serious debate.

Now I am going to move into, in the remaining bit of time that I have left this afternoon, to move into one area in which I do not want to speak as a partisan at all, but I want to speak to my colleagues in the House of Assembly to find a way to rectify what I believe to be a deteriorating situation right here in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. WELLS: Now I defer to the people who have spent so much longer in this House than I have. The Leader of the Opposition has spent longer than I have. There are members on this side that have spent longer than I have. No? I guess the hon. the member for St. John's Centre, not too many more, most of us on this side were -

MR. DOODY: East Extern.

MR. WELLS: Yes, East Extern, most of us on this side were elected round about the same time. Certainly the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) with his vast experience in this House.

Now it was not by accident, Mr. Speaker, that I mentioned some of the various things that I would like to see debated and like to take part in in the way of debate in this session. Because I mentioned just five or six or seven, and you look at the Order Paper and look at some of the excellent private members' resolutions, and you can add another seven or eight more that are deserving of debate. But what I ask myself is this, if this session goes as sessions have in the past five years that I have been here, are they going to get debated?

You know, people say when the House is closed the House of Assembly should be opened so that we can deal with the serious issues of the Province. But the House of Assembly opens and do we deal with the serious issues of the Province. I do not think we do. Individual members make fine speeches. There are fine speeches made this afternoon. And sometimes the debate is, for want of a better word, maybe an old-fashioned word, sparkling. But a good many times it is simply a dully rehashing of things that we have heard over and over and over, diatribes of one sort or another that do not do anything to raise the standard of debate in this House or do anything for this Province. As I say, I make a plea to my colleagues in this House, on both sides, for God's sake let us this time, before the session really gets underway, let us have a look both at ourselves and at the rules to see if there is anything can be done to make the debate worthwhile and more productive, and to deal with more subject matters than are dealt with now in this House of Assembly.

I had the advantage last Summer to talk to a friend of mine who sits in the British House of Commons, and I asked him how

MR. WELLS: it worked and how they managed to deal with matters so quickly and seemingly so expeditiously and how they had the time to spend so much time on legislation when we seem to spend ages and ages on the Throne Speech debate, the amendments to it and the sub-amendments and then into the budget debate, amendments and sub-amendments, how come? And I have asked the same questions to people who sit in Ottawa or who sat in Ottawa, how come so much business can be dealt with in seemingly so short a time? And the English comment, the comment of my friends in the English House of Commons, is very interesting. He said what we do, firstly, we limit specific debates, we go about it in that fashion. I remember when the British House of Commons opened in October past, 1976, they had a debate on the first day that began two o'clock in the afternoon and it was a debate on the state of the British economy and

MR. WELLS:

that debate, believe it or not, finished twelve o'clock that night.

MR. ROBERTS: What did we have? Thirty or forty -

MR. WELLS: Thirty or forty speakers, exactly. This is fantastic.

I took the trouble to enquire as to how that particular debate was accomplished. The answer was this, that it was agreed that the debate would go until twelve o'clock that night. It was agreed between the parties and the members of the House of Commons before it started. But then a self-policing mechanism came into effect, and apparently in the British House of Commons it works. That is this, that people who enjoy great stature in the House of Commons, people like former Prime Ministers, leaders obviously of the three major parties, such people if they go for half an hour, it is allowed by the members of the House. In other words, they respect these people, the positions they hold and they positions they have held to such an extent that they will allow them almost by common consent to go that half an hour.

But if an ordinary, private member who does not occupy such a position goes for more than six minutes, five, six or seven minutes there will be cries from both sides of the House to the effect that what you are doing is an insult to the House itself because no man should have the right, no man has the ideas or the force or whatever it is to dominate or try to dominate or impose himself on the House for more than that because after all what is the House but the distilled representation from the people of the whole country.

MR. ROBERTS: For 600 members it is a little different.

MR. WELLS: That is right, it is a little different.

PREMIER MOORES: Could we have a motion to send the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) to Westminster?

MR. WELLS: Well, I do not know. I do not want to talk about any particular member, but I do want to say that the only way we are going to in my opinion in this House deal with the many, many subjects which cry out for dealing with in Newfoundland and for which debate is necessary is to have short, sharp, punchy debates, debates where a member is forced to get up, marshall his thoughts, put them together and spit them out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS: I have watched in Ottawa, I have watched our colleague who sits in front of me here from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) and I think in Ottawa they have a rule, I am not sure, if it is fifteen or twenty minutes?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Twenty.

MR. WELLS: Twenty. I have sat in the House of Commons in Ottawa and seen him sit back with his foot up and punch out a speech in twenty minutes with everything that he wanted to say. Now maybe he would have liked longer, and I have seen other members up there do the same thing.

MR. ROBERTS: The shorter the time the bigger the preparation.

MR. WELLS: The shorter the time. And you ask yourselves, Mr. Speaker, which are the best debates which are held in this Chamber. And you know when they are, I would say, Mr. Speaker, they are the afternoon Late Show. Five minutes of punchy questions, five minutes of a punchy answer, a reply. These are the best debates that are heard in this House, not the rambling on and on and on and on until it is enough to make you sick. That is what happens.

MR. CALLAN: Would the hon. member permit a question?

MR. WELLS: Yes, of course.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman for Kilbride (Mr. Wells) seems to be suggesting at least to me that perhaps some rule changes are required. And from what he has been saying, and is experienced in other Houses and so on, that he has some ideas for rule changes or the Standing Orders changes. So my question is simply this. On the 21st of May, 1976 the hon. Brian Peckford set up two Standing Committees, the Public Accounts Committee, which has been meeting, and another committee, the Standing Orders Committee, with the hon. member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells) as a chairman and I as a member, among others. My question is - you know I have seen the need for rule changes and so on - why has that committee not met? It is my simple question as a new member.

MR. WELLS: Oh yes. I was going to lead into that. But as the hon. member has asked it I will deal with it now. I am still the chairman of that particular committee and I am prepared to remain so unless my colleagues would prefer somebody else to be. The question of rule

MR. WELLS:

changes, I understand, has been discussed between the two house leaders, the government house leader -

MR. ROBERTS: No, between myself and the hon. gentleman for Grand Bank (Mr. Hickman).

MR. WELLS: Yes. I was going to say I do not know about how much the Opposition house leader but I know that the Leader of the Opposition himself has engaged in these discussions. Now obviously if something could be worked out between the two sides, as it were, all to the good.

If it is felt - and I certainly for my part would be glad to take advise or direction actually from both sides of the House on this - but if it is felt that this Committee on the Standing Orders has a role to play and a role to play quickly in sorting out and doing something about the Standing Orders, then of course I would be very happy to call the committee together and the members of it and do our best. I think this has

MR. WELLS: got to be attacked quickly. There is another good thing, I think; as the figures stand now both sides of the House would have to be involved in rule changes, it can only be done by agreement. I think that is a good thing rather than a bad one and therefore, I think, that we all, recognizing some of the shortcomings, some of the things that are happening, and these things hurt the Opposition too, perhaps in some respects more than the government, because if you have these sort of short, sharp, touchy debates that I am talking about where the issues are dealt with, where things are debated, where perhaps a time limit of two days is put on a debate, in other words, you take Private Members' Day; Private Members' Day could be a delight but Private Members' Day last year turned into a hell. I remember when Private Members' Day was taken up all day by petitions. One day we did not even get to the Private Members' Resolution and there was one resolution which was a fine resolution, I have no doubt. I forget what it was but I believe it went for about fourteen weeks. It was outrageous, it was disgraceful, and all the other decent topics of debate on the Order Paper were never gotten to. So if we can reach some agreement on the rules to limit say debates on a Private Members' motion, maybe to one day, maybe to two days, limited either by imposing a time limit on the speeches or by agreement to the self-policing agreement that will give everybody a chance to speak, then we could have members get up, think out what they were saying, express it in ten minutes or fifteen minutes and sit down and let somebody else have a turn.

That is the only way, I think, Mr. Speaker, that this thing can work, the only way. You take Labrador; that is on the Order Paper now and we have started it. There have been two or three speeches, excellent speeches.

MR. MURPHY: Outstanding.

MR. WELLS: Outstanding speeches, but either that is going to drag on all the session to give everybody a chance to have his say, which means that other very worth-while resolutions are not going to be got to at all, or we shorten it up and we say to members, think out what you are going to say and get up and get it out of you and let us have the advantage in one afternoon of the debate going back and forth across the House.

This was one of the advantages this afternoon. We heard from the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall), we heard from my hon. friend from Lewisporte (Mr. White), we have come back here again. I do not know if we will get back there again this afternoon or not, but you see, a debate has some sort of balance. I have never heard of any debating society in the world where anybody will get up for hours on end.

AN HON. MEMBER: Or a week.

MR. WELLS: Or a week or whatever. You know, it loses the character of a debate.

MR. MURPHY: It serves the purpose for all that.

MR. WELLS: It loses the character of debate and if this House - you see, after all this House is not the government. This House has no executive capacity.

MR. ROBERTS: There are only sixteen or seventeen members of the government who sit here.

MR. WELLS: Right, we are not the government. But what this House really is, and what every House of Commons or House of Assembly is, as I see it, is a place where the affairs of the day are debated, the pros, the cons. And that is what the House contributes to the government, because the government are seeking their members in the House, their participating in it, they are also listening. And this is where the House has the influence on government, quite apart from whether the fact that government can rise or fall - or fall I should say, or come

Mr. Wells.

into effect by reason of numbers. But the House itself is a debating place, and it is up to the members to debate the issues in a way that gets across, that the debates are heard in the Province or the country, wherever it may be, that both sides are heard, that the government can be influenced and that we can all learn something.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the hon. member allow me?

MR. WELLS: Yes.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Does he think if this were done that it might have the terribly desirable effect of bringing the debates of the House to the people of Newfoundland, which they are now not done. The people of Newfoundland have not got the foggiest notion of what goes on in this House now. Would the changes suggested by the hon. gentleman change that?

MR. WELLS: I think so. I think the only way -

PREMIER MOORES: It would keep people in their seats.

MR. WELLS: That is right. As the Premier says, it would keep people in their seats.

You see, let us look at the position that a reporter is in up there in that Press Gallery. Somebody is droning on and on, and on and on, what is there to write about? You cannot very well fill a newspaper or a newsbook with a load of stuff that is coming out of one person.

MR. ROBERTS: It will be in Hansard.

MR. WELLS: That is right. But you see, if the hon. the Leader of the Opposition is expressing a view in ten minutes, the Premier in ten minutes, you know, the member for Bay of Islands in ten minutes, if the

Mr. Wells:

debate is going back and forth like this, then the people who after all, because everything we say will never get outside of this Chamber unless it is reported. We have to remember that. And sometimes we may think -

MR. DOODY: I think it is agreed that we are not going to change the business -

MR. WELLS: Sure, we can pass legislation, but we are not going to influence the thinking of Newfoundland— and I think we have a duty to influence that thinking. I think we have a duty to make things clear as we can, with our limited talents, to the people of Newfoundland— we are not going to do that unless we give these people up there something that they can experience the back and forth, across this House, the interchange of ideas and the clash of ideas and put it out to the people. That is the only way the people are ever going to be served.

MR. ROBERTS: If the press are now reporting it accurately.

MR. WELLS: That may be one of the problems.

MR. GOUDIE: That is the unfortunate part of it.

MR. WELLS: So I have a few minutes left, I had brought as an example of what I had intended.

MR. MURPHY: Come back Monday, 'Bob'.

MR. WELLS: Oh yes I have a few minutes left.

MR. ROBERTS: If the hon. gentleman does not stop now we will be back -

MR. WELLS: That is right. And I will outline some of the things I have in mind in the ten minutes or so that remain to me when we come back.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House adjourn until Monday next, provided that if it appears to the satisfaction of the Speaker after consultation with the government, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time the

Mr. Peckford:

Speaker may give notice that he is so satisfied and the House shall meet at the time stated in the notice and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved that the House adjourn until Monday next at 3:00 P.M., provided that if it appears to the satisfaction of the Speaker after consultation with the government that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time the Speaker may give notice that he is so satisfied and the House shall meet at the time stated in the notice and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: It is a debatable motion, but I do not propose to debate it. The Premier and the House Leader have done me the courtesy of consulting me with respect to what is a somewhat unusual procedure, but if the government feel they have reason, and I do not object, and I in turn have consulted my colleagues who, you know, we were prepared to support the government's request. The only request that I would make, Sir, would be of Your Honour or the table officers, most of us on this side, and I suspect on the other side, will be away from St. John's on the weekend for one reason or another, if the House is called to meet I think it is terribly important that as much notice as possible be given and that every effort be made to get word to as many of the members as is possible. Obviously all who are aware of what has happened today will be, you know, listening to the radio and so forth. That is the one request I would make, Sir, if the government feel the House should come together during the weekend.

MR. SPEAKER: Now before putting the question, bearing in mind the request of the Leader of the Opposition, we will endeavour to contact everybody by telephone, by telegram, an expeditious way as well might be radio news, by a news broadcast.

Is the House ready for the question? Those in favour "Aye".

SOME HON. MEMBER: "Aye".

MR. SPEAKER: Contrary "Nay".

SOME HON. MEMBERS: "Aye".

MR. SPEAKER: Carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Monday, February, 21, at 3:00 P.M. unless, pursuant to the adjournment motion just passed, meets earlier.