

PRELIMINARY

UNEDITED

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

FOR THE PERIOD:

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

Wednesday, March 23, 1977

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present, actually it is four petitions, Mr. Speaker, on the same subject. One from the community of Greens Harbour, one from the community of New Harbour, and one from the community of Hopeall, and the fourth one from the community of Whiteway, in Trinity - Bay de Verde, signed by 713 voters, Mr. Speaker, and the prayer of the petition reads as follows:

"Whereas the road from New Harbour to Spaniard's Bay is one of the oldest access roads between Old Perlican and St. John's that is not paved, and whereas this road is continually being used to get to the western side of Conception Bay and in particular the Carbonear Hospital, and whereas it is of great inconvenience to travel the Trinity Bay Road to Heart's Content in order to cross the Heart's Content Barrens Road to get to the western side of Conception Bay and the Carbonear Hospital, and whereas the traffic on the New Harbour to Spaniard's Bay Road is as heavy as the traffic on the Heart's Content Barrens Road, we the undersigned citizens of the four communities—that I have mentioned—do hereby petition the government to upgrade and pave the road between New Harbour and Spaniard's Bay."

Sir, in speaking in support of this petition I would simply point out to the House, Sir, that this dirt road is only twelve miles long and at the present time for the people to travel from these four communities I have just mentioned, to Carbonear, there is a forty-five mile drive over the Barrens, and of course it is on pavement and it is quite a different situation from the district that I first represented

MR. ROWE: in this hon. House, Sir, but people are quite anxious, and the traffic is heavy on that old road which is in terrible condition and the people would like to have it upgraded and paved.

Sir, I might add that with the building of the new mall in Carbonear it is anticipated that the traffic going both ways of course will increase over the next year or so and be - it is interesting to know as well, Sir, that when the Carbonear Hospital was built a promise was made by this present administration, the promise was made that once the Carbonear Hospital was completed, the people of these communities were promised that this particular road from New Harbour to Spaniard's Bay would indeed be upgraded and paved.

Now I have been speaking with the gentleman who brought this petition into me and he spoke on behalf of the 713 people and he says that the people who signed this petition are all too aware of the financial circumstance of the Province at the present time and the possibility of this particular road not being on the top of the priority list for paving.

The petition calls for paving, however I would like to point out to the Minister of Transportation and Communications that the people will be deeply grateful if this road were just upgraded this coming year, substantially upgraded, with the hope that in the very near future,

Mr. Rowe:

and as soon as possible that the road be paved. But barring no pavement, Sir, the people strongly recommend and have asked me to ask in as powerful terms as I can for the substantial upgrading of that twelve mile section of road.

So, Sir, I give this petition signed by 713 people 100 per cent support, and I hope that the minister will see fit to speak to it because I have received some correspondence from the minister where he suggests that in the road building or the construction programme this year, there was some indication given that that particular stretch of road is not exactly at the top of the priority list as far as paving is concerned. I would like for the minister to give some indication whether he would undertake to at least substantially upgrade that road at least for this year, and have it strong enough for paving the following year, Sir.

So I ask that this petition, Sir, be placed upon the table of the House and referred to the department to which it relates.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from Harbour Grace.

MR. H. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this petition.

I am sure if the hon. minister would look through his files he will find letters there from me concerning this road that links the district of Harbour Grace, and as the petition requests it fulfills a need for that area from Trinity Bay side, but also, Sir, from the Conception Bay side. This is really an access road to the Trans-Canada, and I did one time recall having a discussion with the present Minister of Finance on the possibilities of getting DREE to go in on that road.

And not only that, Sir, but another thing that I would like to stress is that wholesalers from Conception Bay, that road is used quite a lot, quite a few teachers are teaching from Conception Bay drive across that road, and also the main thing is fish being trucked from Trinity Bay to the plants in Harbour Grace and in that area. Sir, I really do ask the hon. minister concerned, as

Mr. Young:

requested by the hon. member from Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe), that every consideration be given to this road, and like he said if it is not paved at least could be widened, upgraded, and therefore, Sir, I support the petition wholeheartedly.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to give the hon. gentleman a hand, Sir, to try and get that road upgraded over there between Green's Harbour and New Harbour, Hopeall and Whiteaway. The hon. gentleman made a very strong case, Sir, for having that road upgraded. And it is the first time to my recollection since I have been in this hon. House, Sir, that I heard an hon. gentleman be realistic enough, and reasonable enough to offer the minister a compromise. And I cannot see how the minister can refuse it, Mr. Speaker. The hon. gentleman said ultimately the people would like to see that road upgraded, reconstructed and paved, but not all in the one year. They would be satisfied this year just to have it upgraded. And I think that is a pretty reasonable proposition. It is too bad, Sir, the Premier does not make the member from Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) Minister of Transportation, because then there is no doubt about it that this road then would not only be upgraded and reconstructed this year, but it probably would be paved also. But it is a very fair and reasonable request, Sir, and I hope that the minister will grant the prayer of the petition in the next fiscal year.

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MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member wishes to have leave to revert to petitions. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MR. J. WINSOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to present a petition on behalf of the Fire Department of St. Jacques - Coombs Cove, representing the communities of Wreck Cove, Coombs Cove, Boxey, Mose Ambrose, English Harbour West, and St. Jacques. The prayer

Mr. Winsor:

of the petition; these people express their "utter dissatisfaction in regards to the unwarranted so-called telephone service rendered by the Canadian National Communications. Over the years we have experienced untold difficulty in dialing long distances as well as local calls. Most of the difficulty in long distant dialing can be contributed to two factors, namely; poor and inefficient long distance lines, failure of operators to respond to calls, local dialing problems as a result of too many parties on the same line, or failure of exchange

MR. J. WINSOR:

equipment in local areas. In light of the foregoing statements we are demanding improved services based on these main arguments: One, inefficiency of long distance dialing. Long distance charges are imposed for a call originating from St. Jacques to Coomb's Cove and Red Cove or vice versa, a distance of some fifteen miles by road; Two, because of the inefficiency of long distance dialing over the short distance, we are hampered in the performance of our duties; Three, because of the multi party lines in some communities we are further hampered in responding to local calls; Four, considering the modern facilities provided in some not so stable communities, we feel we are being discriminated against. Therefore we are demanding that telephone services be upgraded immediately!"

In supporting this petition I must point out that their big problem is dialing long distance for a telephone call and you can just imagine when a house is afire and you have got to wait for the operator in Clarendville, possibly five minutes, it could be just too bad. A bit too hot for you for one thing. And there are a number of party lines and people, as we all know, on party lines there is much to much chatter, needless some of it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Would you give me the name of it?

MR. J. WINSOR: The local improvement district of St. Jacques-Coomb's Cove. I realize that this falls within the purview of two departments, Transportation and Communications and Municipal Affairs. I feel quite sure that the Minister of Transportation and Communications is going to suggest that I contact my federal member. But I point out to him that a couple of days ago, yesterday possibly, he pointed out that transportation was not all of his department, that communications took up a great deal of it. I would like him to remember that when he is answering to this petition and use his influence with the federal minister of communications and see if something cannot be done about it. I have experienced the same problem myself and I find it very frustrating and I am sure the

MR. J. WINSOR:

people who have signed this - it is signed by forty persons -

AN HON. MEMBER: The CNT?

MR. J. WINSOR: That is the CNT. It is signed by forty persons, Your Honour, and I have much pleasure in supporting this petition. I ask that it be placed upon the table of the House and referred to the department to which it relates.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all the independent Liberals in this Province, Sir, and all the other people who have no particular party affiliation, it gives me great pleasure, Sir, to whole-heartedly support the petition presented by my hon. friend on behalf of his constituents in the local improvement district of St. Jacques-Coomb's Cove. My hon. friend is aware, Mr. Speaker, that this problem is not merely isolated to my hon. friend's district. You can find similar situations all along the Southwest Coast, in my hon. friend's district from Hermitage and in the district of LaPoile, the district that I have the honour to represent in this hon. House.

It seem to me, Mr. Speaker -

AN HON. MEMBER: And Burin-Placentia.

MR. NEARY: And Burin-Placentia.

AN HON. MEMBER: Northern Peninsula.

MR. NEARY: Northern Peninsula. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that when CNT, who are responsible for the telephone systems along the Southwest Coast, when they decided to put in telephones in a lot of communities they took the attitude that because the people had nothing before that they thought they could bring in obsolete systems and install them in the communities and the people would be satisfied with them. Well Your Honour knows that only lasts for a limited period of time until the novelty wears off, and then people demand the same service that they have in every other part of this Province.

MR. WINSOR: There should be no charge for these long distance calls.

MR. NEARY: There should be no charge - I completely agree with my

MR. NEARY:

hon. friend--on these long distance charges from ten to twelve miles away. I had the same problem by water calling from LaPoile to Grand Bruit.

MR. J. WINSOR: There is no extended service there.

MR. NEARY: And there is no extended service there. They have to pay a long distance charge. And this is not good enough in this day and age, Mr. Speaker, socking it to the poor people of this Province the way they are.

You know, I sometimes wonder if CNT should be in that business at all, if Newfoundland Light and Power should not be forced to carry out their franchise in this Province' -

AN HON. MEMBER: That is Newfoundland Telephone.

MR. NEARY: Newfoundland Telephone rather, to carry out their

Mr. Neary:

franchise in this Province that has been given to them by the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities, and provide a modern up-to-date telephone service in every community in this Province. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to support the prayer of the petition and I hope that the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications will communicate the feelings of this House to his counterpart in Ottawa, so that something will not only be done for my hon. friend's community but will be done for every other suffering community along the Southeast Coast of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from Burin-Placentia West.

MR. P. CANNING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to support this petition wholeheartedly because there are two or three settlements in my district that are yet isolated, and in those settlements that is the service they have is CNT telephone. All I can say about it is just a little bit better than nothing. If the sun is shining and it is a fine day, no cloud, you can possibly get through. But when the sky gets overcast or a little rain, a little snow and you try to get through there you hear the most peculiar noises you would hear on anything.

I have made complaints directly to Canadian National time and time again, and they are going to do something about it; and that was not yesterday, I have been at that for the past twenty years. And there was a little additional improvement, they have put in a few more phones, but the service is just ridiculous. Like I say, it is a little better than nothing. I have gone as high as three weeks trying to get through to the little town of Monkstown, three weeks trying day after day. It is a bit frustrating for me trying to get through to them, so you can imagine how frustrating it is for those people to get to the outside world. I know it is federal. And there is definitely a need for improvement. Lives can be lost, if there is an accident or something people can

Mr. Canning:

be suffering for days, cannot get in touch with St. John's to get a helicopter or a plane or any other means of transportation.

So I heartily support the petition, Mr. Speaker, I do hope that the Provincial Minister of Transportation will get after Ottawa, and I will have to admit that I have been after my friends the Liberals up there for almost twenty years, and darn little that they have done about it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from St. George's.

MRS. H. MACISAAC: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a word in support of that petition too. I too live in a district where we have a small area, the little town of Gallants, which is suffering from the same problem. In Gallants there are, I believe, approximately thirty-five families, and the telephone system is anything but adequate. We have one private line in the town of Gallants, and we have a ten line system, ten parties on the same line, and there is no possible way to get through to Gallants or for the people from Gallants to get outside of the area. They have on occasion had to leave Gallants and make a trip to Stephenville Crossing to get urgent phone calls through, because of the fact there are ten people on one party line.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is CNT also?

MRS. MACISAAC: This is CNT also.

And there is only one private line in the whole community. There are thirty-five families who have requested private lines and who do not have any telephone connection whatever, they are not able to get a telephone. And, of course, they will not even put in an extra ten party line. So I think that the service is definitely not adequate and not good enough for the people of Newfoundland. We certainly should not have to put up with that type of service in this day and age.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MRS. MACISAAC: I certainly hope the minister will make representation for what we want. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from Eagle River.

MR. STRACHAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the prayer of this petition. We have over recent weeks raised a number of petitions concerning the telephone service in the Province. And exactly as my colleagues have stated, we have in my district alone many communities which have had very poor telephone service, if any at all, I have the community of Charlottetown which went without a telephone service, that is , you would not call in or call out of the community from December 23 until February 1 this year. If you wished to use a telephone for any emergency, one had to snowmobile a distance of forty miles, and I state that snowmobiling a distance of forty miles to get the use of a telephone for emergency cases is not good enough in this day and age.

Mr. Strachan.

I also have many other communities who have fringe radio, that is radio on which you might as well be on CBC, because everyone else can listen to you. They listen into the conversations. In fact at one time we used to listen to the telephone service on the Labrador Coast which used to be the means of communication rather than the CBC news. I have known many cases, for instance, that I have flown 110 miles in order to make a private telephone call, that you could not have a private telephone call. Now I must admit that the Newfoundland Telephone Company since they took over from Bell Telephone have improved the service. The system has improved, especially North. They did spend a considerable amount of money, \$1.2 million to put in a telephone system, and we are grateful for that. We feel we should have sufficient service, a service as good as the rest of the Province. But there are many other areas in my district, especially the small communities, the smaller communities up to a population of 100, which do not have telephone service or if they do have it is extremely inadequate. It is a service which often will be out for many, many days. It is a service which works on the weather. If the service quits, if the service ceases, then what happens is that, depending on weather, it cannot be repaired again until the repair men get back in, if they are stuck by weather. And the weather can be down from anything from twelve to twenty-one days at a time. And so we wait many, many days in order to be able to call home.

In fact, I remember when the new system did come on in North, I was in the House here, the first time I could ever talk to my wife directly. The first time was when I was in this House here that I could ever talk to my wife directly and converse without

Mr. Strachan.

anyone else hearing me. But we have real problems with the telephone system, and although I may give them a clap on the back for what they have done so far, I feel that they should not increase the rates, and they certainly should not do anything else until they can provide a service all across the Province, in all the communities, adequate service, a service which is as good as calling from here to Grand Falls or here to Gander.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, I cannot refrain from standing to support this petition presented by my friend and colleague. I represent a district, Mr. Speaker, which is the fifth largest in the Province, population-wise, and the second largest as far as the number of communities in each district. I think I would have to agree with the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) when he says that he rather doubts that CN should be in the telephone business at all. I have talked to gentlemen who work with CN who tell me that they think they will be out of jobs in a few years. And some of them tell me that they are ashamed to let people see them going around with their coveralls on. The coveralls have the big CN on the back, as most people know.

The telephone system for, I would say, about half the district of Bellevue is served by CN, and I have had numerous occasions where I have tried to call constituents in Little Hearts Ease, Hodges Cove and North Harbour and Garden Cove and so on only to hear the operator in Clarendville say, NC - no circuits - or on some occasions I have dialed directly Hodges Cove or Little Hearts Ease and somebody down on Random Island answers, Hickman's Harbour, down in the other member's district.

Mr. Callan.

I have heard some M.H.A.'s, Mr. Speaker, talk about conference calls where rather than making separate calls, they have asked the operator, "I want to make a conference call. I want to talk to four or five people at the one time." Some M.H.A.'s tell me they do this. Well I can tell this House that it is quite easy to make a conference call to an individual community, because as the member for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) mentioned -

MR. STRACHAN: We make broadcast calls.

MR. CALLAN: - nine or ten people, six and seven and eight and nine and ten people on the same line is quite common.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give another reason why I agree with the member for LaPoile when he thinks that CN should not be into the business at all. Here is a unique situation. Coming up the district of Bellevue as far as Thornlea, CN has the telephone service there. Between Thornlea and Norman's Cove there is a gap of seven miles - not as the crow flies but as the car travels over the back roads and so on.

MR. CALLAN: But anyway in that seven mile gap - at Norman's Cove we have Newfoundland Telephone, at Thornlea we have CN - well, a couple of years back a gentleman got the idea that he was going to start a farm halfway between the two communities. and so he built a house and his two sons followed him there, and so you have a small community, in a sense, three homes there, three families.

Mr. Speaker, these people have tried on various occasions, they have tried CN and they have tried Newfoundland Telephone to get phones installed there in their homes, about three and a half miles from Thornlea in one direction and three and a half from Norman's Cove in the other. In order for one of these gentlemen to get a telephone it would cost them \$1,800, because there is no line there, you see, one system ends here and another system ends in the other community.

I contend that if there was one telephone company serving the whole Province we would not have this sort of a situation.

In concluding my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would say that the only thing I can see good, and the only good word that I can speak on behalf of CN in this Province, is with regards to the Chief Operator in Gander. I am sure that every hon. member in the House has seen the Chief Operator advertising the new system that they have in Gander, when you see this lady there, Bonnie Pritchett, who is the Chief Operator at Gander, and I would say personally speaking, that is the only good thing about the system. I say that, Mr. Speaker, because that lady is my first cousin, as her mother was a Callan before marriage and she is also the first cousin of the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) as her father is a Lush and of course she was a Lush before she married.

AN HON. MEMBER: Now we know her.

MR. CALLAN: From Gambo, Bonnie Pritchett from Gambo, that is

MR. CALLAN: the only good thing that I can say about CN.

I support the prayer of the petition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the speakers on this petition. We seem to all get away from the petition that came from forty residents in the St. Jacques - Coomb's Cove area. But I guess the main reason is because the problem is common to many areas of the Province as the various speakers outlined. And of course as minister responsible for communications, and my predecessors in that same position, we are quite aware of the problems we have around the Province, in particularly the remote and rural areas of Newfoundland. We have a rather unique situation, we have two carriers, telecommunications, telephone carriers, one being under the control of the provincial regulatory agency, in this case the Public Utilities Board of Commissioners, and the other being under the federal regulatory agency, the CRTC, now called the Canadian Radio, Telephone, Telecommunications Commission.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, fully aware of the various problems people are having with both carriers, but I must say before I go any further I would like to commend one of the carriers for the substantial improvements they have brought about in Labrador. Only a couple of days ago I took part in a ceremony which opened up a microwave system from L'Anse-au-Loup to Charlottetown, which will now provide adequate telephone systems to the Port Hope Simpson, Mary's Harbour, Fox Harbour, Charlottetown area, on the Labrador Coast, and that is the second leg of a three year programme. The first was a microwave system from Goose to Nain, and that of course helped overcome some of the problems on the Labrador Coast. And now this system that went into operation

MR. MORGAN: two days ago again is a substantial improvement to the communications systems on the Labrador Coast. And I commend them for their work they are doing and I wish them well in their future plans and developments.

Now with regards to the CNT, there is one thing that I am concerned about, and this will be brought forward at an upcoming meeting commencing next Monday in Alberta, where the Federal Minister of Communications, the hon. Madame Sauvé and all my counterparts in the other provinces across the nation, will meet with her to discuss legislation only yesterday introduced in the House of Commons, new legislation with regards to communications. The only one minister who has refused to attend that meeting because he feels his province has a mandate to take over control of all aspects of communications, in this case the Minister responsible, the hon. Mr. O'Neil, in the Province of Quebec. He feels that his province has a mandate to take over the control with regards to broadcasting systems, programming systems, and carriers and inter-connection systems in the Province of Quebec. Of course we feel as a Province that we can negotiate any differences we have with the federal level of government and of course the other nine provinces, or in this case eight provinces, feel the same way.

One of the things we will be discussing will be the role of the CRTC. The CRTC can now control telephone companies, in this case, which are under federal control, Crown Corporations in this case, CN Telecommunications. And last year in 1976, Mr. Speaker, we being fully aware of the problems we have like those in St. Jacques - Coomb's Cove area, and over in the western part of the Province and other parts of the Province, in the Burin Peninsula area and other

Mr. Morgan:

areas of the Province, in the Bellevue area. Last year I invited the Federal Minister of Communications to come to Newfoundland and listen to our complaints and listen to our policies, and we do have policies in the Department of Communications provincially as to how we feel we can overcome the problems we have in communications. So last year Madam Sauve came down with approximately fifteen or sixteen, I think, officials of her department, came down and sat down with us and at that meeting there was an agreement made and signed that a major study be carried out into the telephone, telecommunications systems and broadcasting systems we have in the Province. As a result of that a major study was commenced, and the officials, the Director of Communications in my department is a very competent, able individual, Dr. Tom Grandy, accompanied by officials from DOC, The Department of Communications in Ottawa, and accompanied by officials, in each case, whichever area they were responsible, from the CNT and from Newfoundland Telephone Company. They travelled all over the Province except they have not covered Labrador which they intend to cover next week. So by Easter we will have the study and survey fully completed, and then a report compiled, and the purpose of the report of course is to define and to determine the problems we have in communications, both aspects, broadcasting, broadcasting reception and signals in remote areas of the Province, and telephone and telecommunications servicing to rural and remote areas.

After the report is compiled, Mr. Speaker, it is then the intention to again sit down with Madam Sauve, the Federal Minister responsible, and to hopefully, and I repeat, hopefully, determine possible solutions. So, Mr. Speaker, these problems that we have in communications, we are fully aware of them. We are hoping that the meetings in Alberta this week will help overcome some of the jurisdictional questions, and we hope that our upcoming meetings with the Federal Minister in the next number of months we will be able

Mr. Morgan:

to find solutions to the problems we have around the Province in communications.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I could not let the opportunity pass without just saying a brief word about telephone service, I hope not to stray too far from the subject, except to draw attention to the particular problems in my own district just to support what has been said by my colleague from Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. J. Winsor), and to make, I hope, an overall, a general point about telephone service, again without getting into the specifics of communities, such as Grey River, for example, which has had particular problems, and without at all being unkind to the Telephone Companies. I am sure they have a very difficult job to do.

I nevertheless want to say that because of the monopoly situation which they have, and nobody can argue that, you cannot have two competing telephone lines I suppose, but the monopoly situation does introduce some disadvantages. The person in Grey River or any other community does not pay his bill right on time, they have a very swift recourse, the telephone people do, to cut off the service and then you have to pay to get your service reconnected, and you have to go through a lot of trouble and a lot of time. But in those cases where a customer waits up to three weeks, and I had the occasion recently in the case of Grey River where people had to wait three weeks, it is somehow taken for granted that the telephone company can continue to collect from those people just as though they had had service, and if that were any other branch of the retail market, obviously if you did not get the product you would not have to pay for it, if you did not get the service you would not have to pay for it. And I say in this particular respect, Mr. Speaker, the monopoly situation in which these people find themselves is being taken undue advantage of by those companies, and equal parallel comments could be made by the electric utility companies in that respect. It is a matter that I would commend to the

Mr. Simmons:

Minister of Consumer Affairs for some investigation. I am making the point , if he has not heard, that very often when a customer is without telephone service for an extended period, through no fault of his own, he is nevertheless billed the same monthly rate, and

MR. SIMMONS: . I believe that there is a principle involved there that might bear looking into.

MR. MURPHY: It could be out for days, very poor service, yet you are expected to pay the thirty day bill?

MR. SIMMONS: I just had nine persons in Gray River, nine parties out for three weeks. ;.

MR. MURPHY: I would appreciate to having the particular ones.

MR. SIMMONS: Sure, I would be delighted to give them to the minister.

MR. MAYNARD: Down in Petite, in my district, they were out for a year.

MR. SIMMONS: A year?

MR. MAYNARD: A year.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, of course we had a couple of petitions this afternoon . One from my colleague from - or four from my colleague in Trinity- Bay De Verde about road conditions, and one about telephone conditions, both of which affect the Department of Transportation and Communications. How touched we are that the minister rises to talk about communications. He elects not to talk about roads but he has his own good reasons, I suppose.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please! I must point out to the hon. gentleman that he is now getting into the area of debate.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. I just meant to compliment a very hard working minister for being so intouched with the communications problem in this Province, a fellow we do not often praise, and I just want to say how touched we are that he is so in touch with the situation. A man who gets no thanks, no bouquets , no T.V. sets. Mr. Speaker, today he has really excelled himself and I hope he will display such interest in the road situation as he does in telephones.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, when the franchise was given originally to the first company that established the telephone system in St. John's and later throughout Newfoundland, there was a time limit placed on it and that time limit was reached and it expired. Now the legislation that gave that franchise provided that at the expiration of the franchise the Government of Newfoundland could take it over, could assume it. That date fell due while I was in office in this province, and for about a year before it fell due I was beseeched by two great organizations. One was the CNT - Canadian National Telegraphs - and the other was the Bell Telephone Company, which was represented here at the time by a man named Thomas Fildes. He came every Sunday morning to my home on Roaches Line and would come up there and talk about everything under the sun and not mention telephone, but I knew why he was there. He had acquired financial control of the Avalon Telephone Company. He had a majority of the shares and was in absolute control of the company.

On the other hand, Donald Gordon wrote me and when he came to Newfoundland came to see me, and would sometimes telephone me urging that the CNT should be the one to take over the telephone company when their franchise expired. Now it was entirely up to the Government of Newfoundland to decide who should have it. Would Tomie Fildes be allowed to sell out, as he wanted to do, to Bell Telephone, or would the CNT and Donald Gordon be permitted to acquire the system? We discussed it in Cabinet and came to the conclusion that it would be bad for Newfoundland if there was to be only one telephone system in the province, that this would be a monopoly and although if it went to CNT it would be a publicly owned monopoly, and if there is to be a monopoly it ought not to be privately owned - better that it be publicly owned than any other kind of monopoly. But we felt that with a monopoly

MR. SMALLWOOD: even the CNT, which had spent a good many millions of dollars to improve the CNT telephone service in this Province,

Mr. Smallwood.

it would be better for Newfoundland if we had a second, and so we agreed that they could sell out to Bell Telephone and Bell Telephone today are the owners of the company which is now known, I believe, as Newfoundland Telephone Company, not Avalon anymore.

I believe that there has been the best part of a quarter of a billion dollars spent by CNT and Bell Telephone on improving the telephone services in Newfoundland and Labrador. The comparison of today with ten, twenty years ago is just out of this world. We have a system which is incomparably better than anything we ever had. But compared with, say, Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, or almost any other province of Canada, the service that we have is abominable. It is backward and inadequate and unsatisfactory in every way. But I think on the whole the decision we made was the right one. At least we do now have two separate competing giants in the communications field -

MR. NEARY: They do not compete.

MR. SMALLWOOD: They compete in two ways: Number one, in the invention of new devices, in the improvement of the technological advances of the communications industry there is the fiercest possible competition between those two giants across Canada, Bell Telephone, I believe - I am almost certain - being a giant subsidiary of an even bigger giant in the United States. The CNT is, of course, the Government of Canada. And these two giants have made giant advances in scientific development and improvement of communications. And I think Newfoundland is benefiting from that degree of competition. I, of course, obviously, needless to say, I agree completely with the prayer of the petition and I hope that - not that this government, not that the Government of Newfoundland can do very much about it - but that something will be done.

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

MR. FLIGHT: I wish to speak briefly to this petition now, Mr. Speaker, and support the petition. I can relate very easily to the problems raised by my hon. friend from Fortune on behalf of the people of St. Jacques. I have in my district a community, Buchans Junction and Millertown - in the community of Buchans Junction, Mr. Speaker, there are roughly sixty families and the minimum number of people on a party line is four, maximum six. I have been in that community and tried to contact various households and have had to go visit door to door because there was just no way - if one member on that party line is using the phone the whole five phones are out. I think everybody understands that as academic. There are only two long distance circuits out of both communities, Mr. Speaker, and I have had to travel from Buchans Junction and Millertown, back to Buchans, a distance of around twenty-two miles, in order to make a long distance call. Now having said that, I might also say that I have taken these problems up with CN and CN at this point have agreed to remedy the situation to the point they can. They are installing microwave to give those communities more long distance circuits.

However, I can certainly appreciate the frustrations and I certainly can relate to the problems that communities with five or six party lines systems are going through, and I believe the answer is for the minister to put pressure on CN to upgrade these facilities. I concur with the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) when he indicates that any community that loses their service for an extended period of time should have that considered when they received their telephone bill. And to the Minister of Consumer Affairs I would say, Sir, that I have seen the community of Millertown without any telephone service at all for five days,

Mr. Flight.

but that was not taken into consideration when the next bill came. And I think that the minister should talk to CN and have this problem rectified.

Now having said that, Mr. Speaker, I want to make these other two points. I am not sure that I buy the theory that has been raised, that the CN should be out of the telephone business in Newfoundland. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that _____

Mr. Flight:

if CN were not into the telephone business in Newfoundland, there are hundreds of communities in Newfoundland today that would not have any telephone system at all, let alone a bad one. Any company whose motivation would be profit, I can think of a lot of communities that have a phone system albeit it may not be the best, they would probably have no service at all. And, Mr. Speaker, speaking for myself, all I want to say is that I am not interested, and I suspect a lot of other people will not be interested in having another utility company get a complete monopoly in this Province, the type of monopoly that Newfoundland Light and Power has. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from Lewisporte.

MR. F. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to speak very much on this, I just want to make one point relevant to the discussions on the petition presented by the member from Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. J. Winsor). Mr. Speaker, we all have, as we have heard members say today, problems with the telephone service in all our areas, particularly those of us who live in rural Newfoundland. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, that CNT are making a desperate attempt to improve the service in rural areas, although they are being delayed in some areas.

Mr. Speaker, this past year CNT opened in Gander a \$6 million toll centre that is the most modern in Canada, and it certainly compares favourably and it is far better than anything that Newfoundland Telephone Company has on the Avalon Peninsula. And that is the point I want to make, Mr. Speaker. I find it far easier dealing with CNT in the Central Newfoundland area in terms of service, getting through to the operator and all that kind of thing than I do with Newfoundland Telephone Company in St. John's. try to get through to the operator at night and it is almost impossible; you have got to wait for eight and ten and twelve and fourteen and fifteen times, and I just want to make the point that I find CNT service in Central Newfoundland comparable or even

Mr. White:

better than Newfoundland Tel in St. John's.

MR. R. MOORES: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member from Terra Nova.

MR. T. LUSH: I feel obligated, Mr. Speaker, just to utter a few phrases in support of this petition for the residents from St. Jacques and Coombs Cove. And I feel obligated to do so not insomuch as the CN is a telephone service which is supplying telephone service throughout my entire district, but there is one community that I want to mention in particular where telephone service is absolutely essential and that is of course the island of St. Brendan's. And, Mr. Speaker, I can suggest to you that the telephone service on that particular island is probably out 50 per cent of the time, and outside of the ferry service I would expect that is the most common complaint that I get is the telephone service to St. Brendan's. And it varies, the kind of service they get, the adequacy of the service varies with the weather. I must say CN is very co-operative in coming in to try to correct the thing. But I am told no sooner have the people who come in to repair the thing left, and the thing is not working again.

So it seems to be a large problem, Mr. Speaker, and the quicker that we can get these services upgraded, the quicker that CN can get these services upgraded to these communities where particularly phone service is essential, and I would suggest to you that St. Brendan's is probably - it is most essential that we have an adequate service to St. Brendan's where they only have, their only connection with the outside world is a ferry link, and it is most important that they be able to communicate, to be able to reach areas outside in the case of emergency and other such cases.

So I have no hesitancy in supporting the prayer of this petition.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, like every member of the House, my constituents have telephones, I suppose that in itself is a reason to support the petition, because none of us, Sir, is satisfied with the telephone service which we are getting.

My friend from Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. J. Winsor) in presenting the petition in behalf of the people who live in these two communities along the Western side of Fortune Bay has, however, touched off a far more important debate than simply the question of getting telephone service improved to the people of St. Jacques and Coombs Cove, as important as that is. I think we have seen as well that in almost every single constituency in this Province, certainly in the rural constituencies, there are difficulties with telephones, and I could second everything that has been said both in praise and in condemnation of both Newfoundland Telephone Company and CNT because my district is served by both and it suffers with both. I think each of them is making an effort, and at times I get very angry when I do not think they are making enough effort, but really that is not the point I want to make.

The point that

MR. ROBERTS: I want to make is that I think it is incumbent upon the minister of Transportation and Communications to lay forth a policy which sets forth certain basic standards of communication services that will be available to the people of this province. Now, I know communications in the constitution are federal but, of course, telephones within the province are under provincial jurisdiction.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about CNT?

MR. ROBERTS: No, the C.N.T. Mr. Speaker, are under the federal regulatory authorities simply, as I understand it, because they are a federal company. If they were to be as Newfoundland Telephone Company, a provincial company, our Public Utilities Board would have the jurisdiction. Furthermore I venture to say that an Act of this House could make C.N.T. subject to provincial jurisdiction. It could. But be that as it may, I do not want of forcing these companies to do anything because I would rather try the carrot than the stick. I think what I would like to see, and what I suggest to the minister, Sir, the time is come when we should have a defined standard a publicly defined standard of telephone service, one that will be available as a matter of right to all the people of this province. Telephones are not only a great convenience they are in most cases now a luxury - I am sorry, in most cases they are now a necessity. Instances have been given by my colleagues here of examples where that is so. I could give many other examples and so, I suspect, could every member of the House.

So, what I say to the minister quite simply is this, he has begun the work. I have had an hour of so with the minister's blessing with Dr. Grandy. I find him to be very bright man and a very dedicated and interested and the aware man and that is a good thing. But let us now set forth the policy. Let us set forth the policy on extended area service. Why should people have to pay a long distance charge to telephone, say, from Raleigh to Griquet, a matter of six or seven miles, simply because they happen to be in

MR. ROBERTS: different exchanges. Or in southern Labrador, where there are only 2500 people along fifty miles of road they are five or six long distance points. To call from Forteau to Lance au Clair, which is just over the hill, again it is a long distance charge. That is one question which should be resolved. Then there is the question of standards of service. Why are telephones out for days and weeks on end, and they are out? Are they unavoidably out? Can steps be taken to remedy it? There will always be problems. Here in St. John's there are problems, Heavens knows. Then finally there is the question of cost. C.N.T., I gather, actually makes money. It is one of the few operations within the entire C.N.R. system which breaks even or makes money on a genuine economic basis. The rest of the C.N.R. operations, with the exception of the hotel, are hopelessly subsidized. They are costing millions of dollars a year but it is another subject.

But, why are telephones this way or do they have to be this way? This too is a point, Sir. Mr. Speaker, I think the prayer of the petition is a reasonable one and I think the minister would his best efforts to see that it is granted. I am sure that he will do that. Sir, I do not think that is enough. I think the real point of what has been said today, and I think it has been a very useful mini-debate, the real point of what has been said today is that the Government of this Province have a responsibility to define, the standards of communications that our people have a right to expect, and that they must define them and they must then ensure those standards are met and I believe Sir, the Government of this Province has both the constitutional and the practical power to make that so. Sir, I would say to the minister let us have the policy, let us debate it, if it needs to be debated, and let us get down to the business of enforcing it. The people of this Province are entitled to better telephone service than they are getting now. It is up to the minister to try to get it for them.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, if I may have a short word in support of this petition. It is undated but I believe I received a copy of that petition, if the hon. gentleman will nod, I did - sent to me in my capacity as Minister of Justice because of an association I have with the voluntary fire brigade of St. Jacques—Coombs Cove, who represent Wreck Cove and Boxey, Mose Ambrose and English Harbour West.

It is my recollection that I know I responded to their petition and indicated the procedure that should be followed by them in bringing to the attention of the CRTC, the Federal Government regulatory body, the procedures they should adopt in attempting to obtain an improvement in services. The hon.

MR. HICKMAN:

member for Fortune Bay-Hermitage (Mr. J. Winsor) nods his head, because my recollection is I sent him a copy of the correspondence and also suggested that their federal member, the member of Parliament for Burin-Burgeo, his support should be solicited as he is a member of the Government of Canada. I have had no indication as to what kind of response Ottawa has given. My guess is that if the response had been favourable the hon. gentleman from Fortune Bay-Hermitage (Mr. J. Winsor) would not have bothered to present this petition to the hon. House with the request that it be forwarded to the appropriate governmental department or agency in Ottawa.

There is one disadvantage I see, Mr. Speaker, in the operations of the C.N.T., Telecommunications, in Newfoundland and that is that they are subjected to the regulatory body known as the C.R.T.C., which makes it rather difficult, expensive, virtually impossible for customers of Canadian National Telecommunications to respond to applications for rate increases, or to seek orders from that board for an improvement in service. Now I do not know whether the C.R.T.C. have the same jurisdiction as the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities have over their utilities within Newfoundland. But our board, the Newfoundland board on at least one occasion ordered the Newfoundland Telephone Company Limited, with respect to their operations on the Burin Peninsula, that they improve the service. Indeed they made an unprecedented order by ordering them to install the dial telephone system. But that was done after strong representation from the joint town and community councils of the Burin Peninsula in May of 1966 or thereabout. Now, I am not sure that the C.R.T.C. have that authority. If they have not it is regrettable. If they have it, it is almost impossible for a group the size of the

MR. HICKMAN:

voluntary fire brigade of St. Jacques-Coombs Cove to go to Ottawa and appear before them.

There is another procedure that is followed quite frequently, and I believe it is followed with the C.R.T.C. and it is different from our procedure, namely, that they simply file their tariffs and they give notice of their proposed tariffs. If anybody wants to object to the tariffs they can do so if they are lucky enough to find out about it. Whereas our board advertises that an application has been made and it is up to the utility to come in and satisfy the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities in Newfoundland that they are entitled to a just and reasonable return - well they are by law - that they are entitled to a rate increase. This gives the consumer the right to object.

The St. Jacques, Coombs Cove, Boxey area is an area that has had -

MR. NEARY: It is the first time the hon. minister was right in his life.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Did the minister hear what was said about you in the House?

MR. HICKMAN: I heard it distinctly, definitively. My day has been made. I have never felt so proud in my life. But if I can get back, Mr. Speaker, to St. Jacques - Coombs Cove and be allowed to proceed with the kind of silence that the hon. gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is so anxious to confer upon this House? may I say that in my area, particularly in the Grand Bank area we had a very strong and long association with all of the towns that are represented by this petition. Whilst we have certainly a modern service now on the Burin Peninsula, when we communicate with Boxey or Mose Ambrose or St. Jacques we find that those on the receiving end are encountering some difficulty. I was referring, Mr. Speaker, to the operations of Canadian Telecommunications, National Telecommunications, draw this

MR. HICKMAN:

House's attention to the obvious diminution of the services being offered by the CN telegraph in this Province. Indeed the nerve centre for the South Coast of Newfoundland was at Grand Bank. They had a large office that occupied one-third of the floor of the Federal Government building.

MR. HICKMAN: today there is not one -

MR. NEARY: Are there any anywhere in the Province?

MR. HICKMAN: I am not sure, but there certainly are not any on the South Coast. I presume there is some on Water Street in St. John's because I still see that they decorate their sign at Christmas time. At least, Mr. Speaker, if I may conclude, and in response to the suggestion that CN have closed down their telegraph offices, I certainly know they have done it on the South Coast. They did it over the strongest objection of the residents of the area and most assuredly if the service for telephones in St. Jacques is as bad as the telegraph service is on the South Coast today, then the petitioners most assuredly are entitled to rapid and sympathetic redress.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, I just stand for a moment or so to offer my sympathy, in the first instance, to these people who are subjected to such terrible service, and because my department has been mentioned by a couple of members. I would like if any complaints arising from the telephone service would be brought to the attention of the department, and I can assure these members that anything we can do in our power we will certainly do it. But we cannot do it just on hearsay. There has got to be something from either a community, a group of people or from an individual that their service was cut off for eight or ten days, and as everybody is aware, next to Light and Power if you like, telephone affects more consumers than anything else in the Province. So I would like to urge all members any complaints we would like to have them either here in St. John's, in our Grand Falls office, or Corner Brook office. We are available at any time to follow any complaints.

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

MR. HODDER: I rise to support the petition presented by my colleague from Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. J. Winsor) and I would also like to say to the Minister of Consumer Affairs that I certainly am pleased that he has said that because there are many, many telephone problems that come from my district and I have been taking them to the telephone company -

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order, I must hear the hon. minister.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, it is difficult hearing the hon. gentleman, I do not know if his mike is working or not. We cannot hear him over here.

MR. SPEAKER: I would ask hon. members to bear in mind that some members are having difficulty hearing the hon. gentleman.

MR. HODDER: The speaker is on, Mr. Speaker.

But anyhow, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased about the minister's statement as I have been going to the telephone company in very many cases, and have not been getting the results that I think, or at least that I desire.

But I would like to say something else about the telephone exchange in the district that I represent. I think that there are approximately 3,000 people on the Port au Port Peninsula. And amongst that 3,000 people we have three telephone exchanges. We have the Stephenville exchange, which reaches out on a certain portion of the Peninsula; we have the Lourds exchange and the Degras exchange. And I think it is one of the few places where to call across the road you have to call long distance. And in almost every instance you are calling less than ten miles - anywhere over ten miles you are calling long distance, and it is all in this little group of 3,000 people. I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is a travesty of justice and I think that it should be looked into by the Transportation and Communications

MR. HODDER: Department and representation should be made to the telephone companies, because when you have three exchanges amongst 3,000 people there has to be something wrong. And this is not a rich area and their long distance charges are very large. For instance between the French communities of Mainland to Cape St. George, they are very close, these two communities, but yet they must phone long distance. And some of the telephone bills that I have seen, that residents have shown me from each of these communities are very, very high indeed, and I think that something should be done about it in this case.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Conception Bay South.

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question, if I may, to the Minister of Finance, and President of the Treasury Board. Perhaps he would be good enough to tell us if he or his officials have made any new offers to the workers from the Waterford Hospital, and what is the current situation there? Or are we now at a stalemate and the strike continues as it is of today?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, the government has made no new offers or overtures since I last reported to the House, I think on yesterday. This morning however I did have a discussion with Mr. Locking,

MR. DOODY: the chief negotiator and general manager of NAPE who has made a counterproposal. This was around noon time today, and government has not had an opportunity to examine it nor the board nor the administration nor the Department of Health. We are encouraged by this move and we hope that something positive will come from it. But as I say, it is much too early to be able to say exactly where we stand on the situation now. That is the first break that we have had to date.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary - the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I guess better late than never. My supplementary grows out of the minister's answers, Sir. Could he indicate to the House when we might expect some answer to be made with respect to this most recent proposal by Mr. Locking? I understand from what the minister said that first of all his officials in the bargaining unit must look at this to examine it, and then of course the board of the hospital who operate the hospital, even if the government end up paying for it must examine it, and then the Cabinet themselves must look at it to consider it whether they approve it. So that may take a little time, but can we expect an answer to be given today or tomorrow? I mean what I am really asking, I guess, Mr. Speaker, is is there any real hope that the union have now made apparently a significant counterproposal based on what the minister says. Is there any real hope that we may see this matter moved to a resolution very quickly?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. DOODY: Yes, the hope is certainly there, Your Honour. There is no question that we all hope that we can bring this thing to a speedy conclusion. As to the degree of significance of the counterproposal, it would be premature for me to speculate on that. As I say, I can only announce to the House that this has been received

MR. DOODY: and we are very grateful and happy to have it come in. We had a session with Mr. Locking this morning that was cordial and courteous and until such time as government gets an opportunity in conjunction with the board and the other interested parties to analyze and to size up the offer, what the significance of it is and what the implications are, it would be premature for me to put a date or time limit on it. I would hope that we should be in a position to respond within a couple of days, but that is a hope. I hope it will be earlier than that and it may be later. I cannot honestly say, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question of the Minister of Justice in connection with the strike at the Waterford, Sir, and the situation at the Waterford where some weird things have happened in connection with the administration in the last few weeks.

Would the minister tell the House if the administration at the Waterford can ignore a court order that was given this morning to - I think it was this morning - to admit a patient to the hospital for examination? If a union ignores a court order they are hauled into court. What about the administration at the Waterford who ignored this court order?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: The answer to the question from the hon. the member for LaPoile is nobody but nobody can ignore a court order and that includes the administrator for the hospital and the court -

MR. NEARY: They did ignore the court order.

MR. HICKMAN: Anyway, Mr. Speaker, obviously hon. gentlemen are not aware of what transpired.

MR. NEARY: Well, tell us.

MR. HICKMAN: I am answering the -

MR. NEARY: Tell us what transpired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Would the minister care to give us the -

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary?

MR. NEARY: Yes, Sir. Would the minister care to give us the circumstances surrounding this ignoring of the court order? Just what happened? Was it a mistake? Did the court make a mistake in the beginning in issuing the court order? Just precisely what happened?

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I most assuredly would not comment on whether the court makes or - on a decision of the court. That would be highly improper and Your Honour would not permit me anyway. I understand, and I have to confess this was not brought to my attention until noon or later today, that yesterday apparently a person who had been remanded on previous occasion to another institution, that the Magistrates Court in St. John's had ordered him admitted for observation to the Waterford Hospital. There was by a person in the employ of the Waterford Hospital a refusal to admit this person on the grounds that he was under the impression that the policy of the board was to admit no one and that therefore he could not accept him. This morning this was brought to the attention of the court, and the court, as a judicial act without consultation with my department and without seeking any crown counsel, ordered that the administrator show cause why the order was not carried out or be cited and the administrator appeared in court this afternoon and was told that the gentleman was to be admitted forthwith, and the gentleman has been admitted forthwith. That shows to me beyond all reasonable doubt

Mr. Hickman:

that our courts insist that all court orders in this Province are carried out without question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER : A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: The supplementary is to the Minister of Finance, Sir. Would the minister confirm that over a year and a half ago, or between a year and a year and a half ago, following the last round of negotiations with the Waterford workers that the minister gave a commitment in writing to the employees at the Waterford Hospital that their pension plan would be restructured before the contract expired? And what has the minister done about that? Have the government honoured that commitment, that obligation to the workers in there?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member from LaPoile is well aware I answered that same question in the House shortly after the beginning of the unfortunate strike at Waterford, and I quoted the operative clause from that particular letter, that was in a letter addressed to the unit dated July 7, 1975, and the operative clause to which the hon. member refers says, and I quote, Mr. Speaker, "In particular government recognizes that justification for revised pension benefits exists for those employees of Waterford Hospital with a record of lengthy service comprised of constant involvement in the supervising and care of patients." At the same time, as I have already explained to the Hon. House, government together with the unit agreed to establish a commission of enquiry and mutually agreed that it be headed up by Mr. Howard Dyer, whom we had hoped would resolve our mutual problem. Unfortunately, both from the unit's point of view and from government's point of view, the report was anything but satisfactory in that it did not make the recommendations which both of us on our opposite

Mr. Doody:

sides of the fence would have hoped that it would have made. And subsequent to that in the beginning of negotiations this year government recognized the fact that a commitment had been made and I have quoted that commitment.

And in particular, as I said, government recognizes that justification for revised pension benefits exist for those employees of Waterford with a record of lengthy service comprised of constant involvement in the supervising and care of patients.

And in line with that commitment and in honouring that commitment, an offer was made to the unit involving some, I think, seventy patients with a revised pension plan, a restructured -

AN HON. MEMBER: You mean employees.

MR. DOODY: About seventy employees, I am sorry, I said patients, I am sorry. Seventy employees were singled out because of their lengthy terms of service. And it was suggested that these people who were employed at the Waterford prior to 1960, when we recognized or agreed to recognize the fact that circumstances may have been different in there at that time, would indeed be justifiably involved in the restructured pension plan.

This offer was not acceptable to the unit, and subsequently the strike occurred. Subsequent to that a further offer was made by government, by the Board, lengthening the numbers of people involved, and I think the new offer was somewhere between eighty-five and ninety people of the unit, and there was also a change in the benefit portion of the plan. I think it was, the original offer, was on a five year average basis; the second one was on a three year average basis. This offer was also rejected by the unit, which of course is their right, and so the strike has dragged on.

The move this morning by Mr. Locking is in effect a further revision of that particular pension plan. Now whether or not it is one that can be lived with is, as I have indicated to

Mr. Doody:

the House, has yet to be decided because the government, the Board have not had an opportunity to analyze it, and to see what its implications are. But

MR. DOODY:

in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, and I think in the opinion of all fair-minded people, at the time of the writing of the letter in July, we did recognize the fact that there were particular circumstances at Waterford particularly some years ago before improvements had been made - and I am not suggesting that the situation in there is any means perfect - but we recognize the fact that justification for revised pension benefits did exist for some of the employees in there. And we have been making efforts to honour that commitment ever since.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the hon. member for LaPoile followed by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Would the minister indicate to the House, out of this eight-five or ninety employees that the minister referred to, that was a counter-offer made by the government with regard to being included in the new restructured pension plan, out of the eighty-five or ninety, how many were members of the bargaining unit and how many were administration?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. DOODY: The first group that I have listed on the first offer, there were twenty-four people who were eligible for retirement immediately, and these people varied in title or classification from psychiatric nursing assistant supervisor to, and then there were fifteen psychiatric nursing assistants III, another psychiatric nursing assistant II, three psychiatric therapy aide II, another psychiatric therapy aid III and three more psychiatric nursing assistants III. So these twenty-four people would have been eligible to retire immediately of the seventy that I mentioned. Of the balance I honestly do not know. I do not know how many of them were in the unit and how many of them were outside the unit. As I said in the beginning, and as we mentioned in this House at many times, we referred and recognized

MR. DOODY:

that anomalies might exist in the offer and these might be the anomalies or some of them to which I referred and said, "We would be willing to sit down any time and discuss that!" And if there are some people in there in our offer who it was felt should not be in there, then that could be discussed. And if there were some people who should be added whom we inadvertently left out, then that could be discussed. But we never did get down to that level of discussion because the unit has held out up to today for the Warder's pension plan for all those people with maximum patient contact. And so the question that the hon. member has just asked has really not surfaced on the table because we never did get down to that level of discussion, unfortunately.

MR. NEARY: Can you get the information?

MR. DOODY: I can certainly try.

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

MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister tell us, first of all, what proportion of the employees at the Waterford Hospital received contact pay—whatever its modern name is. I do not think that particular term is used anymore. And secondly, and I think this is getting close to the essence of the question separating the union and the government on this issue, why did the government draw the line at 1960? The minister has said there were some changes. I have no doubt that he has something in mind when he says that. But could he be a little more enlightening. What specifically were the changes? I do not claim to be terribly familiar with the administration of the hospital, but I was Minister of Health for a year or two, two or three years in fact, during which the hospital was being directly administered by the department and thus under my direct ministerial

MR. ROBERTS:

supervision. And I do not recall being told of any major changes which had occurred at that point. It would have to be a pretty important to justify a cut-off that in effect is the only issue in the strike as it now stands. The minister shakes his head in the negative. Of course, he will have the opportunity to correct me if I have gone astray. But my understanding is that that is the major issue, that only the people before 1960 have been offered a revised pension plan. That is correct.

MR. DOODY: 1965.

MR. ROBERTS: 1965 now. Again we have a deadline. The people who have been there for the past twelve years, which is a fair length of service, Sir, more than almost any member of this House has served, twelve years, those people who have been there for twelve years or less do not have access or will not be granted a new pension plan as matters now stand. So my question then would be why 1960, what for the changes, why the dividing line there and then subsequently why 1965 and then going out of that is 1965, like the law of the Medes and the Persians, or can it too be changed?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: That has been indicated. As I said the 1960 figure was an arbitrary figure as the 1965 figure was an arbitrary figure.

MR. ROBERTS: So there is no specific change in anything.

MR. DOODY: There was no magic in that. As we have said to the unit it could be 1958, it could be 1967, come in and show us where the differences are and what the difficulties are and identify the people who are involved and let us work it out and talk about it.

MR. ROBERTS: Or 1977 it could be.

MR. DOODY: That is a possibility that can be looked at. But the position of the unit has been, "We want the warder's pension plant." And we have said -

MR. NEARY: For all -

MR. DOODY: No, no, not for everybody.

MR. ROBERTS: For all in contact.

MR. DOODY: For all the maximum, now that is important too, Not all the contact, to be absolutely fair to the unit. They are not demanding this pension plan for all the contact employees. But there are two levels of contact pay at the Waterford, Your Honour, there is a maximum level and a minimum level. There are two different levels at least.

MR. ROBERTS: People get -

MR. DOODY: And those people, and I think there are about 290 involved and there are probably some people in the gallery who can correct me if I am wrong. There are about 290 people involved in the maximum contact pay area and those are the people who feel that they need and deserve the warder's pension.

As for the significant changes that have taken place in the hospital since the time that the hon. member was

MR. DOODY: Minister of Health, I really cannot tell you.

MR. ROBERTS: But there is no specific major change.

MR. DOODY: No, I cannot - there is a new wing shortly to be opened -

MR. ROBERTS: I planned it. Yes.

MR. DOODY: But that is not opened. Part of it is in operation but not significantly.

MR. ROBERTS: If I might, Sir, a further supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A further supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: We are getting to the heart of the whole system as it now stands. We are really talking about 290 people who are in contact - to use that, which is a term of art, a phrase of art in that sense - who are in contact with the patients who are in the maximum security wings and the patients who have difficult problems requiring, you know, requiring appropriate treatment. Now let us be clear, Sir, that some of those patients in the old Justice wards, which thank God will be removed and destroyed, I hope, when the new wing opens, those patients of course are in the Waterford Hospital because they are too dangerous to be handled by the warders. I mean that is the simple truth of it. They are too dangerous for anybody - you know, for the penitentiary system to handle. Our penitentiary is a medium security institution at best.

So we have these people who are patients and we have the employees who must deal with them. Why does the government not agree to allow the 290 people who are at the maximum contact level, that principle has been accepted, it is embodied in the pay plan, it is embodied in all the approaches over the years, there have been no changes, as the minister says, why then does not the government simply say, "All right, for the 290 people who are in maximum security work and have to deal with people under these conditions, patients with this kind of problem, we will go along with it." Is it simply a question of cost? Because it will cost more money obviously.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Unfortunately, Sir, in the Province of Newfoundland, I guess in most places, particularly in the Province of Newfoundland the cost has got to be a major fact in any situation. And one of the major difficulties, one of the major dilemmas that we are involved in, are situated, find ourselves in with the situation at Waterford is -and if I may briefly run back over the contact situation, or the contact pay situation, the people at Waterford some years ago made an excellent case for the reasons that the hon. Leader of the Opposition has just pointed out, an excellent case that there are certain members of the staff, certain employees who deserved special consideration because of special circumstances and this was argued long and hard and eventually the contact pay system came into being.

MR. ROBERTS: Early sixties, was it not?

MR. DOODY: I cannot honestly say; it was before my arrival on the scene.

MR. ROBERTS: Dr. Jim McGrath was minister.

MR. DOODY: God rest his soul.

MR. ROBERTS: A good man. A better minister than we have got now. The minister of Health, not the Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: No, I just wanted to wait for you to finish because this is very important.

MR. NEARY: Carry on, boy. Carry on.

MR. DOODY: The contact pay principle was established at that time and it was established for those people. Subsequently it was discovered that there were people who also worked at the Waterford who perhaps while not in that maximum position were also in their opinion entitled to some extra consideration. And so they in effect bargained successfully and obtained a contact pay level, lower than the first, admittedly,

MR. DOODY: but a subsequent contact pay. Eventually the people at Exon House and the people at the Children's Home came in with a good case to say that theirs was a special situation and that they deserved a special pay. In their case it was not necessarily a contact allowances, I think it was called an environment allowance. But in any event it was a spread situation.

We got into the recent round of negotiations not so long ago when the Boys Home and the Girls Home and the Hoyles Home and various others asked for the same consideration. They needed extra pay because of extra circumstances, and so one of the purposes and original purposes of the Dyer Report, as those people on the negotiating committee who met with us last year then drafted up the letter and drafted up the terms of reference for the Dyer Report, was to try to find some precedent, some thing that we could hang our hats on and say, "This is indeed a special situation and there is no way for it to spread to all the units, all the institutions, all the hospitals around the province - the psychiatric unit at the Grace or the outpatients at the General!" I do not mean to compare the Waterford to these situations, but there are people who work in both institutions who have very similar jobs, although there are people who work at the Waterford who have different jobs.

So we had hoped that the Dyer Report would be able to demonstrate by looking at statistics from other provinces and other parts of Canada, other hospitals in the province, that this special case could be made. Unfortunately as I said earlier, Sir, that did not happen. Subsequently to that we ourselves have contacted twelve hospitals in Canada - the Hillsboro Hospital in Prince Edward Island, the Nova Scotia Hospital in Dartmouth, the Provincial Hospital in St. John, New Brunswick, the Provincial Hospital in Campbellton, New Brunswick, the London

MR. DOODY: Psychiatric Hospital in Ontario, the Queenstreet Mental Health Centre in Ontario, the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital in Ontario, the Hamilton Psychiatric Centre in Ontario, the Selkirk Mental Health Centre in Manitoba, the Brandon Mental Health Hospital in Manitoba, the Alberta Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta and the Saskatchewan Hospital in Saskatchewan. We also got information from the Oakridge Hospital in Ontario and this institution, Sir, was specifically established for the housing and treatment of the criminally insane and all patients have been assessed as unfit to stand trial or have been found not guilty by reason of insanity. The data obtained from this hospital I have here as well.

So out of the twelve hospitals - I will not go through the whole document - but the significant thing is that in Prince Edward Island at the hospital there are no special pension provisions. In Nova Scotia they tell us that there are no special pension provisions. In New Brunswick there are no other special provisions related to pensions or allowances. In Ontario, and I include here that Oakridge Hospital, where I mentioned specifically there are no special pension provisions. In Manitoba there are no special allowances or pensions for those working on the Attorney General wards. In Alberta there are no special pension provisions applied. In Saskatchewan there is no special allowance or special pension provisions for employees working with criminal patients. So our attempts in that area to try to find a precedent and try to ease us out of our dilemma have collapsed.

Now admittedly, Sir, I do not know the conditions in all these hospitals. I have not seen them. I have not been in them. I do not know. Some of them may be Cadillacs, some of them may be 1927 Volkswagens. I honestly cannot say. I can only go by the information that I have available to me at the present time and that information is the cause of part of the conundrum that

MR. DOODY: government finds itself in. It is trying to find a way to recognize the fact that there are some people at Waterford who are deserving of special benefits, special attention and trying to do it in a way that will not be a spiraling, pyramiding sort of situation that will cost successive administrations or the Government of the Province in future years astronomical sums of money which the province may not be able to afford. That is the dilemma in which we find ourselves right now.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo.

AN HON. MEMBER: No principal has emerged yet.

MR. DOODY: No principal has emerged yet.

CAPTAIN WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to divert the attention of the House away from the Waterford Hospital, Sir. I am sure other members can come back to this question if time permits. But I do have a question for the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications. Is the :

CAPT. WINSOR:

minister aware that the students who have to travel on the gravel roads on Fogo Island have refused to travel in the school buses because of the poor gravel road conditions on the Island?

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

MR. J. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, no I am not. If there are any problems with the roads I would anticipate that the gravel roads throughout the Province - in fact this time of the year we are going to have problems, particularly with the Spring thaw. Well if the problems are of a nature where the, either the school bus operator or the parents of the school children using that school bus, if the roads of the nature to warrant action on the part of keeping children out of school, I would strongly suggest that they contact my office or the officials of my office and inform me accordingly.

CAPT. WINSOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the hon. member for Fogo.

CAPT. WINSOR: Is the minister aware that the grader on the Island has been broken down for several days and weeks?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that we have had problems with the equipment on Fogo Island as we have had in many other parts throughout the Province this Spring and Winter, and mainly because of the fact that some of the equipment is in need of being replaced with new equipment. Unfortunately budget restraints do not allow enough funds yearly to purchase all the required equipment. Last year we purchased \$4 million worth of new equipment and this year, hopefully, another "X" number of million dollars as well for the same purpose. But in the case of Fogo, because it is an

MR. MORGAN:

Island and there is the problem of getting parts over there, I can assure the hon. gentleman I will look at the matter myself personally this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Conception Bay South followed by the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Health whom we have not heard too much from on the strike. Would the Minister of Health be kind enough to tell us if the menu now being served in the Waterford Hospital to those who are on emergency work, the policemen and all the rest will be the same diet and menu that will be served to these employees here when they return to work?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

HON. H. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I do not make up the diet at the hospital. But I can tell the hon. member that whatever food is served at the hospital at the present time -

MR. NOLAN: Steaks and shrimp.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. COLLINS: - to the police or anyone else who is in there, this question arose before, everybody in the hospital are eating a similar diet.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the Leader of the Opposition followed by the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. ROBERTS: Well I would simply ask if the Minister of Health will get from the board the information as to how much additional is being - because I understand outside caterers are bringing in unusually attractive meals. I do not begrudge anybody a meal, But it seems to me what is chalk for one should not be cheese for another. Will the minister undertake to find out how much

MR. ROBERTS:

extra it is costing the Treasury of this Province to provide this kind of somewhat generous fare to the people who are working in the hospital while the lawful strike is on?

MR. MORGAN: You have got to eat.

MR. NOLAN: Yes, you have got to eat but not the way they are eating.

MR. ROBERTS: Eat the same grub they do.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I just want to broaden the question that was asked by the member for Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) a little bit and ask the Minister of Finance, Sir, the President of the Treasury Board, the caretaker of the public Treasury, if the minister has had his officials make a cost study analysis since the strike started at the Waterford to see what the cost per employee is now as compared to what it was before the strike took place, in view of all the overtime, the luxurious hotel accommodations that are being provided for people brought in, strike breakers, strike breakers -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! I think the gist of the hon. gentleman's question is now evident and since the time is getting very short I would want to give the hon. minister time to reply.

The hon. minister.

MR. DOODY: I cannot really reply, Sir, because to do so would be to acknowledge the fact that luxurious accommodations are being provided and all this sort of thing and I just cannot accept that because I do not know that it is true. I do not want to detract from the hon. member's very colourful rhetoric and his very descriptive phraseology, but I would like him to be reasonably accurate when he is asking these questions because I know they are of importance to a great many people. The answer is the

MR. DOODY:

same answer that I gave an hon. member opposite either yesterday or the day before yesterday, is that no, we have not had an opportunity to do any cost analysis on it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. SPEAKER: It being Private Members' Day proceed to the adjourned debate on motion (1) adjourned by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been a fortnight since this debate was called in the House and a great deal has happened in the fortnight.

Mr. Roberts:

We have had all the controversy about the sealing industry, and we have had all the discussion about the Scrivener thing, and all the other matters which come before the House. So perhaps I could be permitted in the approximately forty minutes which I understand are left to me, to refer briefly to that which I have already said.

The point which I made in my interrupted speech, the point which I made some fortnight or so ago was that, in my opinion, and I think I speak for a lot of people in this Province, and I know I speak for a lot of people throughout the Labrador portion of this Province that, in my opinion, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): A point of order.

MR. NOLAN: That is why I have risen, I mean the hon. Leader of the Opposition is attempting to bring out a few points in this debate on the Labrador situation and so on, and I submit with respect, Mr. Speaker, that members on both sides of this House cannot hear what he is saying at this moment.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): Order, please! Will hon. members pay attention accordingly.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was not hon. gentlemen in the Chamber who were causing the noise, if in fact it was hon. gentlemen who were causing the noise, it was members who are outside the precincts of the House, or outside the House but within the precincts, and also the people in the lobbies, and I guess they want to talk to each other, and nobody has any right to complain about that, but it is distracting and the result is that either ones words are unheard, which at times I realize might be of advantage to all concerned or one ends up, you know, speaking in a very loud voice and that does not help anyway. The Minister of Justice is listening, and I hope whatever he is chewing is attractive.

MR. NOLAN: Chewing his cud.

MR. ROBERTS: I did not say that.

MR. NOLAN: No.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, whatever the Minister of Justice is chewing is giving his dental facilities, be they natural, dentist supplied or denturists supplied a good work out.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: The hon. member is very irrelevant.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I would think taking a good bite out of the Minister of Justice would be very relevant to the state of things and the state of affairs in Labrador these days. All hon. gentlemen opposite, Sir, obviously having a late lunch or any early dinner as the case may be. The Minister from Grand Falls for once, Sir, is working his jaws to some affect instead of usually as he is in this House when he talks.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Forget the pleasantries now.

MR. ROBERTS: Now, Mr. Speaker, -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Forget it.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman from Grand Falls is ready I would like to proceed.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Commence! Forget the political overtones.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, earlier in this session we developed - Your Honour developed a decision with a tit for a tat rule, and the tit for tat rule.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Why did you not tit yesterday?

MR. ROBERTS: - the tit for tat rule says that if hon. gentlemen opposite chose to be tit, we on this side may be tat. The Minister of Justice shakes his head, shakes his head .

MR. HICKMAN: For the elucidation of the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, in his Chair recently said that he felt it incumbent upon him, and this was without any point of order raised, but points of order had been raised from time to time, and apparently there was some confusion as to the ruling, and Mr. Speaker has ruled that there is no such thing as a tit for a tat rule in this House, and he will not tolerate it.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Speaker -

MR. HICKMAN: And that is the final ruling of the Chair and he made it very definitive, went into it in the greatest detail as Your Honour will recall, -

MR. NEARY: He was on a ministerial statement.

MR. ROBERTS: Was he?

MR. NOLAN: No, no!

MR. HICKMAN: No, no it was not a ministerial - it was during the debate. My colleague who looks so young in the last two or three days, the Opposition House Leader will recall that he and I were very pleased that for once and for all the tit for tat rule had been laid to rest, buried, gone, dead.

MR. ROBERTS: But, Mr. Speaker, I apologize if I have inadvertently transgressed the rule. I was in the Chamber when the tit for tat rule was developed in colloquial between the gentleman from Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) and myself, aided and abetted by the gentleman from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) and myself, but if subsequently the Chair in its wisdom has seen fit not to reconsider the rule, but to expand upon it by saying that the rule that was a rule is no longer a rule, then so be it. But the point nonetheless remains valid that if an hon. gentleman opposite chooses to interrupt, thus transgressing the rules of the House, he can hardly be heard to complain with any validity if he in turn draws a little answering fire.

Now, Mr. Speaker, whether we call that the tit for tat rule or any other rule, we could call it the jot and tittle rule, or a number of things, the fact remains that that was the decision which the Speaker gave. If he has subsequently given another one I am not aware of it, I will have to go and read the Hansards. It may well have occurred during a day when I was away from the House, doing what the Minister of Justice ought to have been doing namely, trying to help the people who were trying to preserve the seal hunt.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: Now, Mr. Speaker, let me come back to talking about Labrador which after all is the motion before the House. When I spoke a fortnight ago I said that in my opinion - I think the opinion is a sound one, it is not mine alone, it is one which a great number of people share - but in my opinion there are very real problems in the relationship between the people who live in the Labrador part of this Province and the people who live in the Island part of this Province and it is mainly the people in the Labrador part who perceive this difference. They may not all perceive any problem. They may perceive different problems and in different parts of Labrador the concerns vary widely from those of people in other parts of Labrador.

The people who live in the district represented by my friend from Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) have very different concerns from people who live in the district which I represent which includes the Southern Coast of Labrador, the area from L'Anse-au-Clair north to Red Bay. The people who live in the district of Menihek have widely differing concerns from those advanced by the people who live say in Happy Valley - Goose Bay. But all, Sir, have one thing in common, they may have different reasons for bringing them to a state of opinion, they all have one thing in common and that is that they are unhappy with the relationship between Newfoundland and Labrador. More and more people are coming to question this. Anybody who thinks otherwise is either being incredibly ignorant of the facts or is wilfully ignoring the facts. We may disagree as to the cause, we may disagree as to what should be done about it, but nobody could disagree about the state of opinion, the fact that it exists and we should be concerned with it.

Now, Sir, I think it is incumbent upon the Government of the Province, or failing them, and they have failed in this case, it is incumbent upon the House itself to discuss this and to try to take some steps to alleviate it. And I do not want to get into

MR. ROBERTS: what the government have done or not done. I have only got forty minutes and it would take a lot longer than that to catalogue the failures of this administration with respect to Labrador.. And I say there are failings despite the valiant efforts of the gentleman from Menihek (Mr. J. Rousseau) who I think has carried on a lonely fight. The gentleman from Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) has made some noises but has done little else. But I think the gentleman from Menihek, who is the only Labrador member in the Cabinet, has carried on a valiant fight and he has simply been overruled time and time again, even on something as simple or as minor as getting government letterhead with Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on it, a name established by this House.

The minister has fought for it. But colleague after colleague of his has gone contrary to that. And the minister whenever he hears about it, has done something about it, but still you know we can still find examples day after day of letterhead currently in use by ministers and by public servants that still says Government of Newfoundland. Hardly a day goes by that we do not see it, hardly a day, hardly a minute.

AN HON. MEMBER: Very embarrassing. Very embarrassing.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes it is very embarrassing to the minister and to the House because it is a flagrant defiance of an act of this Legislature. We saw the minister's colleague, his seat mate, the Minister of Education brought a bill into the House the other day to create the Newfoundland Polytechnical Institute, not the Newfoundland and Labrador Polytechnical Institute, the Newfoundland Polytechnical Institute.

No wonder people in Labrador are concerned and upset. If the government ignore something as simple as that - now I will not say, and I do not want anybody to pretend that I say, that the name of the Province in itself is terribly important. But it is a

MR. ROBERTS: significant symbol and I think the minister will agree with me that the feeling in Labrador is that the people in Labrador are proud to have the words Newfoundland and Labrador making up the name of this Province. And I do not find very many people on the Island who object. And I think as long as our Province is made up of two parts, two geographic parts, and I hope it always will be, the name of that Province should be Newfoundland and Labrador. I think the minister agrees with me.

Mr. Speaker, let me talk in the few minutes left to me about some of the practical steps which I suggest we could look at in an effort to try to resolve the difficulties or to try to improve the situation. And these are the types of steps which in my opinion a select committee could look into and could get opinions upon and good sound opinion. And, of course, as Your Honour will recall, the purpose of this resolution is to appoint a select committee to hold hearings throughout Labrador and throughout Newfoundland too, but throughout Labrador and to receive briefs.

First of all, Sir,

MR. ROBERTS: let me say there are two levels of approach which we can take. I think we should realize there are two entirely qualitatively different kinds of action. One is the practical, the bread and butter, the nuts and bolts. The other is the much deeper and much, much more important in the long run and much more significant. Let me talk first about the more immediate, the more practical easier ones. I will be specific but, in the interest of brevity, I will not go into details. But let me say first of all that I think we as a province, we as a party accept it but I invite the government to accept it, we have got to take as our principal the fact that we believe the people of Labrador, people who live in Labrador must have access to public services comparable to those available to people throughout the Island. That should be the principle Sir, it is a principle which is not now absorbed.

People who live in Labrador Sir, do not have access to public services equivalent to those available throughout the Island. Some of the people do. The people who live in Western Labrador in many ways are ahead of many people who live on this Island. Sir, the people who live on the coast, particularly the southern coast, the neglected coast, the coast that is in my district and the coast that is in my friend's district, the coast from Lance au Clair in the south to Cartwright in the north the coast south of the great indent of Lake Melville, those people, Sir, are the most neglected people in this Province. There is not an inch of pavement. There is hardly an inch of road - worth driving on between Lance au Clair and Cartwright. There is not an adequate municipal water system, there is not an adequate public water system.

AN. HON. MEMBER: Rigolet.

MR. ROBERTS: Rigolet, no Rigolet is on the north side of Melville. Rigolet is under the federal provincial agreement and so is Black Tickle. So if anything has been done in either of these communities, as it has it, 90% is federal or thereabout, depending on the exact

MR. ROBERTS: proportion of Inuit, Indian and settler people in the community. But the Government of this Province, with the piddling exception of what little they have done in Forteau and Lance au Clair and Lance au L'Eau have not put one nickel into water systems. Even something as basic as water systems, forget sewerage systems. The Premier promised them in Cartwright in the summer of 1972, during his one and only visit to Cartwright, he has been in Eagle River a number of times, fishing, but he has only been in Cartwright once. He went there during the bi-election campaign. He told them that the government would - I do not think he promised that the government would do it he said the government would make a study and survey and, We will see what we can do. Of course if the study was done it has not been seen since and no action has been taken. But that kind of public service the people of Labrador do not have access to them. Let me name another one, the CBC, the television. I think it is essential that the people of all parts of this province have access to both television services the CBC and the CTV.

At present only the CBC services are available and that is not universally so. In western Labrador it is available on the ground satellite station at Sept Iles and it comes down the railway. So you can get English and French CBC. You cannot get CBC radio there. In Labrador, on the coast of Labrador there are very few communities where you can get the signal from the ground receiver station that there is at Happy Valley. But again it is CBC. Nothing wrong with it but it is only one of the two channels. I think it is a matter of record, it is the least desirable, the least popular I should say, of those two channels.

Steps much be taken to have the CTV service provided. If it is not economically feasible to do so, and I do not think it is, if it is not then we cannot expect the private network to provide funds because they have to operate under the laws

MR.ROBERTS: of the marketplace.CBC do not. CBC gets hundreds of millions of dollars a year as grants from the Government of Canada, the Parliament of Canada, to enable them to function.

If it is not economically feasible to do so then the necessary hardware has to be provided. The repeater stations and the receiver stations that is what is needed. And I may add what I say about the coast of Labrador applies equally to the northern peninsula. If you draw a line from, say, Bonne Bay across to the bottom of White Bay, Hampden, Jackson's Arm, north of there, there is no private television service available except on a freak or a fluke basis. You can

MR. ROBERTS: only get CBC. So let the government provide it. It is constitutionally permissible for the Government of the Province to do it. It does not infringe upon the federal jurisdiction with respect to broadcasting. Sure I would rather see the Government of Canada do it, they have got more money than our government has. And I think the government as a first step should try. But it has been discussed here in the House, nothing has been done. No approach has been made to the Government of Canada to see if we could get a special programme. What would it cost? \$5 million, \$10 million, they do not even know. The Minister of Transportation and Communications has not got the least idea and nobody in the government has even cared enough to find out what it would cost.

But if the Government of Canada will not provide the money, and as I have said they should be approached and pressured, but if they say No, then I think the Government of the Province should do it.

MR. NEARY: If my hon. friend would allow me for a minute?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, of course.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, there is no quorum in the House, could we have a quorum call?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes we should. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): I would ask the Clerk of the House to count the House.

Order, please! I am informed the quorum is present. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point I was making is that the Government of the Province should take this

MR. ROBERTS: responsibility upon themselves if nobody else does. I think it is that important. I think it is of very great importance and I think it is something which the government can do.

I think, Sir, that the Public Service generally has got to be upgraded. Roads have got to be provided where they are necessary, the sort of situation my friend in Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) talked about in the community of Fox Harbour cannot be tolerated in this Province any longer. The schools in most communities are still inadequate. I know the government are not directly responsible but they do have a responsibility.

Economic development has been a phrase and not a policy with respect to Labrador. In fact for many of the people living in Labrador I think it is true to say that life has not improved at all since Confederation. For many it has become far worse, in real terms.

Transportation services have got to be improved radically and quickly. I do not think we can build roads to every community in Labrador at this time. There may well be many communities in which we could never build roads. But there are steps which we can take. We can do something to help the prisoners of Western Labrador. And the prisoners of Western Labrador are the people of Western Labrador who are being hit by constantly rising air fares and, Sir, for them air travel is the only real means of transportation. The road link is down the railway to Sept Iles and then on from there. Something has got to be done. The subsidy must be increased. Then I think the government should try to open the road across Labrador, to me a great idea, to -

AN HON. MEMBER: How far?

MR. ROBERTS: - put the car on the train in Labrador City or Wabush, to drive it by rail across to Ross Bay Junction and north to Esker and then to drive it by road from Esker across to Churchill on what is a good road, the road which is now used as the supply point for surface transportation to Churchill Falls, and then drive further to the east from Churchill Falls down the Freedom Road to Happy Valley, a road which is now drivable, indeed I hope to drive on it myself this Summer but I do not think it is a very practical road. I do not think it is a very easy road to drive. I think it needs some money spent on it. It needs some attention. That is something the government can do. Something the government can do directly and immediately and positively.

I think they have got to increase the subsidy pay. It is now twenty-five per cent. And I think it has got to be increased. I know it will cost the government money but so does everything else.

AN HON. MEMBER: Twenty-five per cent?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, the twenty-five per cent, Sir. We brought it in. It was twenty-five per cent of what?

MR. ROBERTS: \$100.00, I guess, was the round trip in those days? Yes, it is now twenty-five percent of \$212.00 it will be after the next raise.

AN HON. MEMBER: \$226.00 after the next raise.

MR. ROBERTS: \$226.00 my friend tells me after the next raise. Well there is a big difference between twenty-five percent of \$225.00 and twenty-five percent of \$120.00. People are really - It costs a man and his wife and the family \$1,000 to get out on a holiday, at least. Incredible - the only people in this province who are so cursed. We have to build air strips - Nain, Makkovik, Hopedale, Rigolet, Cartwright, Port Hope Simpson, Mary's Harbour and in the L'Anse-a-l'Fau Area. Ottawa should help but they are helping to an extent. I think they are paying part of the cost of the strip at Cartwright. It is very revealing that the strip at Cartwright is being built in large measure, I suggest because of the oil exploration activity off that part of the Coast of Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, we need more strips and we need them quickly. Something has to be done about the price of electricity. I think that the government and it is not just in Labrador it applies - many of the rural areas of this province have got to do more to reduce the cost of electricity. Why should people be penalized because they live in areas where they must consume diesel generated power? I know the public chest through the government subsidizes this already very largely but I suggest the subsidy is not large enough. Instead of say the first five hundred hours being equalized, which is the present rule, it should be the first thousand. Now that Happy Valley-Goose Bay - a very large area consuming a lot of power - is being fed by hydro power as opposed to diesel generated power then surely the cost of equalizing the first thousand hours, which is getting close to a

MR. ROBERTS: normal consumption, a normal months consumption in a normal home with the usual appliances that, Sir, is not beyond the reach of the Treasury.

But, Sir, these are all specific and very small, as important as they may be, small matters. Let me conclude in the ten minutes I have left - the clerk keeps track - it is like a hockey game. I have about twenty minutes left he tells me. I do not know if I will need them, Sir, but let me conclude by talking about what I believe are the important things that we should do. The other things are important but they do not go very far - roads, schools, municipal services, transportation, television - they are all important. They all should be done. They are all relatively easy to do. All it takes by and large is money. I know money is not always easy to come by but it is not a difficult or a cumbersome idea to accept and it is not a difficult or a cumbersome one to implement given enough cash.

What I suggest we have to do now in this province is to commit ourselves to an examination of the constitutional structure of this province. We have a government of laws not of men. That is a basic truth. But, Sir, in my view, in my belief the law must be made to serve man - not man to serve the law. We must observe the law of course. If the laws are not adequate, if they no longer reflect the realities of the day then they ought to be changed by the proper and appropriate processes. Our constitutional structures have served us well, by and large, but that does not mean that they should not be changed if we can make them serve better. What I am saying really in so many words is that we in this province, in Newfoundland and Labrador, must now be prepared to undergo the same sort of process which we as Canadians are going to go through in the next few years in coming to terms with the situation that now exists with Quebec - in particular with the francophone population

MR. ROBERTS: of Canada in general. I have no doubt there is some who will condemn me for this. Some will say I should not even mention it as if somehow it were unthinkable but the trouble is that when you ignore the unthinkable then it often becomes the immediate.

I believe, Sir, in confronting problems and discussing them and looking at the options and looking at the solutions and then dealing with them.

MR. STRACHAN: It is like walking toward a pothole in the street and closing your eyes to it.

MR. ROBERTS: My friend from Eagle River says not to confront reality is like walking towards a pothole in the street and closing your eyes to it. The concerns are there in Labrador. The men who sit in this House and who live in Labrador or who have close ties to Labrador know that. Anybody else with any real inkling of what is happening in Labrador knows that and any

MR. ROBERTS:

member or any person on this Island who does not know it is either ignoring reality or just does not want to face reality. Whether we like it or not, Sir, whether we admit it or not there is a problem. Many of the people of Labrador, not a majority but a significant minority and one which is growing both in strength and in substance are seriously questioning Labrador's role within this Province. Anybody who does not accept this, as I have said, is either blind or stupid. The signs are on every hand. The gentleman from St. Barbe (Mr. Maynard) was at the conference, I attended it as well, the Labrador Resources Advisory Council in Happy Valley, funded as it is by the government - what? - the middle of February and I think he got an eye opener there, the experience of having a civil servant get up and question, not the government's actions but the government very integrity in their motives. I do not mean the government as a group of men, I mean the government as a government, as a corporate agency. A civil servant, an employee of the Minister of Education, in fact, got up at a public meeting and just did not question the government's actions but questioned the minister. The minister had made a statement of policy and the gentleman said in so many words, "I do not believe you. You are not telling us the truth. You are not telling us why you really act as you do." The Minister of Forestry and Agriculture was there, and if I am wrong I hope he will gainsay me. But I was not wrong. I am not wrong. I was shocked by it. The signs are there. Those of us who represent Labrador constituencies can testify with eloquence and conviction that more and more of our constituents are questioning the very future of this Province as a united Province. I have said time and time again where I stand and where my Party stands, that we believe that a united Newfoundland and Labrador is a much greater

MR. ROBERTS:

one for all of her people. But we also believe that we have got to stand up for it and try to make it so. And for all these reasons, Sir, I think it is of compelling and urgent importance that we in this Province commit ourselves to a fundamental re-examination of the alternative constitutional structures available to us within this Province. I do not advocate any particular alternative but I believe we should look at all the alternatives and weigh them. It is within our power as a Province to do so. The British North America Act specifically gives us this power. I read the relevant sections of the B.N.A. Act a day or so ago, section 92(2) is the one which gives us the power. Let us use it then and let us use it wisely.

What are the alternatives and what are the merits of each? Well the first alternative, Mr. Speaker, the obvious first one is simply to leave things as they are now. This has its merits. The present constitutional structure of this Province has served us as a Province for nearly thirty years. For many years before that it served us when we were a Dominion and then when we were under Commission of Government. Each of us, each of the people of this Province must decide for himself whether it can continue to serve. I question it for the reasons which I have given. But it is an alternative. And if upon looking at all the other courses of action open to us, we feel that it is the best alternative, then let us stick with it. But let it be a conscious decision. Let it be a decision taken by the people of this Province only after they have weighed the various alternatives available to them.

Another alternative, Sir, number two, is at the other end of the constitutional scale and that is the separation of Labrador, the assumption by it of territorial status, often talked about

MR. ROBERTS:

although often in very loose terms. I find it anathema and repellent but it is talked about. And as far as I can understand it the proponents of this form of government, this status, are talking of an arrangement similar to that which now governs the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, the two "territories" within the Canadian Confederation. I must say I do not know of any precedents for the movement from being part of a Province to being a territory. In fact the historical pattern of development in Canada has been the other way around. Most of the Provinces of Canada West of Ontario, in fact, I guess, all of them with the exception of British Columbia evolves from being territories into being provinces, I am not sure about Manitoba. But certainly if you look at the map of Canada before 1905 when Alberta and Saskatchewan entered the Confederation as provinces you will find the territories of Assiniboia and Keewatin occupied the area now occupied by the Prairie Provinces.

So as I say I do not know of any precedents. I can find many on the other side, a territory evolving into a Province. But still I do not know of any reason why this alternative could not be implemented if it were desired to do so. In any event let us put mechanics aside and look at the desirability of it.

Mr. Roberts:

I do not find it very attractive at all, in fact as I have said I find it anathema and repellant.

The people who live in the Yukon and in the Northwest Territories, in my understanding, are anything but satisfied with the status they now have. They want to go forward to being a province, but they simply do not have the population necessary to justify it. Similar considerations surely would apply to the "Territory of Labrador" if ever that came into being. All that would happen, in effect, is that the people of Labrador who now complain about an administration centered in St. John's and remote from their interests, would trade that administration for one centered in Ottawa, even more remote from their interests. What they would be doing is trading an administration which is concerned with 560,000 people, about 10 per cent of whom live in Labrador, for an administration that is concerned with 23 million people, one-quarter of 1 per cent of whom live within the bounds of Labrador.

I do not see that as a step forward, I see it as a great step backward. If Labrador now feels, if the people of Labrador now feel that they are being treated as a colonial dependency, and many of them do, how much more stronger would be the feeling if the colonial power were in Ottawa, not even in St. John's. Not only would the feeling be stronger, Sir, it would be immeasurably more justified.

And so I do not think that the Territorial status is an answer. I reject it without any hesitation. I do not think it would achieve the goals that the people of Labrador, or the people of Newfoundland want to achieve. I just cannot take it seriously. But it is there, it is talked about.

My friend from Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) made some very unwise statements about it one day last Fall. He had been asked, I think, to gather information about it, is what it boiled down to, but he made some very loosely worded statements, which I am sure were open to misinterpretation because they were misinterpreted.

Mr. Roberts:

But it is being talked about.

MR. NEARY: The member was under pressure.

MR. ROBERTS: Well the member was under pressure. The member from Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie), I might add, is under very great pressure from his constituents, perhaps far greater than he realizes, but very great pressure all of the time.

AN HON. MEMBER: What statements are you talking about?

MR. ROBERTS: When the gentleman from Naskaupi made statements that he was gathering information about a separate Labrador, about the territory of Labrador. We saw fit as a group, we happened to be in Stephenville at that point, to denounce them quite strongly and we did so.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am equally unable to see any real merit in the policy which the present government now say they have adopted and that is the policy of setting up more government offices in Labrador. We have heard about this in the Speech from the Throne, the exact words used there were and I quote them "My government"- of course, his Honour speaking - "My Government is very sensitive to the isolation problems in Labrador and has decided to establish regional offices for most departments in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. These offices will be able to respond more quickly and effectively to the needs of the people living in Eastern Labrador".

Equally it should be done in Western Labrador. We have a fine government building there, and what, is 5 per cent of it occupied? 10 per cent? Maybe more? Maybe 15 per cent? Maybe 20 per cent?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Maybe 25 per cent or 30 per cent.

MR. ROBERTS: Maybe 25 per cent or 30 per cent of it occupied. A fine building in Western Labrador. There is a Motor Registration Office there temporarily. There is an officer from the Manpower and Industrial Relations Department, the welfare office is there. What else is there?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Public Health.

MR. ROBERTS: I am sorry?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Public Health.

MR. ROBERTS: Public Health.

MR. PECKFORD: The mining technicians

MR. ROBERTS: The mining technicians, the tax collectors are there, Forestry and Agriculture are there. Every department in which the gentleman from Menihek (Mr. Rousseau) has been a minister by some happy coincidence ends up stationing a man in Labrador, often, of course, they are taken out, or their jobs lessens when he moves.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROBERTS: But, Mr. Speaker, in my view just setting up an office in Labrador representing some government department does not do very much for anybody except possibly the owner of the building, should the government decide to rent one. Experience has shown us that such offices are just another hurdle that has to be got over by a citizen who is seeking some information or who is seeking to gain the benefit of some established policy or programme. The phrase that people in Labrador use is, and my friend from Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) just repeated it, "just another post office." They have no faith in it as a solution to their problems. You will note that I am assuming that offices, if in fact, very many are set up, we are going to get a few, sure there will be a few token offices opened in the Paddon Hospital in Labrador, in Happy Valley-Goose Bay shortly - they will not be putting the picture of Dr. Paddon back I am sure - but I do not think that these offices, if they are set up, will have any real power to make decisions or to influence the course of events. If they did have such a power then I think their creation would be a real step forward. But based on the track record I think I am justified in saying that they will not have any powers, as I have said they will simply be one more desk which the piece of paper must cross.

MR. ROBERTS: I do not think they are any answer at all to the problems which face us now.

Now, Sir, none of these suggested answers, there are three I have sketched, just leaving things as they are; creating a separate territory of Labrador; setting up some more government branch offices throughout Labrador; none of those, in my view, answers the need. None of them takes into account what I believe to be the central theme, the common denominator of the problems which today confront the people of Labrador, of the feeling, the very deep and real and tangible feeling which they have, and that is the feeling of powerlessness, Sir, the feeling that the Government of this Province neither knows nor cares about the wishes and aspirations of the people in Labrador. How many times have we all heard it said, That crowd in St. John's decide whatever they want and they do not think at all about us.

Now I know it is heard in Corner Brook, and it is heard in St. Anthony, and it is heard anywhere else throughout the Province, but no where is it - it is true too - but no where is it heard with more eloquence or truth than in Labrador. And I think it follows as the night follows the day that any policy worth looking at has got to come to grips with this feeling. To put it quite bluntly too often the people who take decisions sit in St. John's and take their decisions without any knowledge of either the facts or the opinions as they exist in the rest of the Province, particularly true in Labrador.

AN HON. MEMBER: You have given four?

MR. ROBERTS: No, I have given three, number four and number five I will touch. I have got five minutes so I will have to be quite quick.

There are two other alternatives which I think we should look at. One of them is regional government. The other is

MR. ROBERTS: the creation of a Labrador Assembly. Now I do not have a lot of time, Mr. Speaker, I will try to be quick, but if I go a moment or two over perhaps the House would indulge me and allow me to carry on to finish the -

MR. WOODROW: You spoke too long already.

MR. ROBERTS: Well if the hon. gentleman opposite does not wish me to Sir, that is

MR. SPEAKER (MR. YOUNG): Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: If hon. gentlemen do not wish to, Sir, that is their pleasure. I may in that case move an amendment to the motion and thus make another ninety minute speech. And if the gentleman from Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) wishes I can certainly, I think, word an amendment in order.

AN HON. MEMBER: He has words.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Bay of Islands certainly has words and I wish for once he would use some and make some sense with them, instead of the speeches he gives us.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman from Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) is showing his temper which is ugly, and I would ask him, Sir, please to contain it.

MR. SPEAKER (MR. YOUNG): Order, please! Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if hon. gentlemen do not want to allow me to carry on that is their right. That is their right. I can ask for leave, if it is not granted it is not granted. I gather we on this side have once in a while granted leave to hon. gentlemen opposite. I believe the Minister of Fisheries was granted leave one day to carry on with an important statement. But if the member for Bay of Islands speaks for gentlemen opposite then there will be no more of it by my colleagues I can tell you. Because what is

MR. ROBERTS: grist for the goose is grist for the gander.

Mr. Speaker, let me say there are two other alternatives. One is to create a Labrador Assembly and the other is to set up a regional government. Each of these two alternatives is founded squarely and fairly on one basic principle, that the people of Labrador must have a greater voice in their own governing than present mechanisms permit. I really do not think the present mechanisms of government can be improved without changing them and that is why I suggest these two alternatives.

Now the concept of a Labrador Assembly is a very simple and a very straightforward one. Every citizen living in Labrador would have the right to vote in an election for the men and women who would constitute the Assembly. The Assembly could meet on a regular basis, perhaps for several weeks each year. Its mandate would have to be a broad one. And perhaps it could be asked to consider and to report upon the government's programme as it affects Labrador at any given year. The members of the Assembly would also have to have the power to raise questions and topics of their own initiative. In a sentence then, the Labrador Assembly would be a sounding board, a forum whereby the people of Labrador could make known their concerns and their wishes. Government could ignore those concerns and those wishes, sure. But it would do so at its political peril.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who would receive the report from the Assembly?

MR. ROBERTS: It would report publicly. It could report to the House of Assembly. I will come down in a moment to talk about the relationship between the MHA's as well. But in any event, no longer would the government, or the people of the Province be able to say, "Well we do not have any idea of what the feeling is in Labrador." The people of Labrador would have

MR. ROBERTS: a voice they do not now have, a voice of their own.

Now I do not see any conflict between the role of that Assembly and the role of the members of the House of Assembly, or for that matter the House of Assembly itself. Labrador now has three and a quarter members in the House, I am the quarter. About twenty-five per cent of the people in my district live in Labrador, about seventy-five per cent on the Island. We on this side think that Labrador should have four in a House of fifty-one, but

MR. ROBERTS:

that is another point, another story. But these four MHA's could serve as part of the Labrador Assembly. They would also serve in the House of Assembly. The House of Assembly would continue to be as it is now, the parliament for Newfoundland and Labrador, the body which controls the government of this Province based on the very basic rule, as it is, that a government can hold office only as long as it has the support of a majority of the House of Assembly. The people of Labrador would continue to play their role in the House of Assembly speaking through their members. Some will say that the proposal to create a Labrador Assembly will take away from the role of the House. There is some merit in it but I do not think the merit is very great. I do not think it is sufficiently great to outweigh the benefits that would come from having the assembly.

MR. PECKFORD: Is that a sort of a large and more elaborate Labrador Advisory Council?

MR. ROBERTS: It could be. The Labrador Advisory Council is not directly elected and its mandate is - well I say confused - its mandate is changing or evolving.

MR. PECKFORD: Right.

MR. ROBERTS: And then, of course, it only includes the coastal areas. I am talking of a direct election perhaps at the same time as we have a general election. There could be an election of fifteen, twenty, thirty or forty people who would come together to speak. They would not have executive authority. That is the important point. The government would not answer to them. There would not be a government and an opposition.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I wish to inform the hon. Leader of the Opposition that his time is up.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank you. May I have leave to continue for a few moments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

MR. SPEAKER: Granted by leave.

MR. ROBERTS: I thank hon. gentlemen, Sir, and I will try to be very brief.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Sir, I will be very brief and I appreciate the courtesy hon. gentlemen have shown me.

Mr. Speaker - did I offend the gentleman for St. John's Center (Mr. Murphy)?

AN HON. MEMBER: No, no! He had to leave.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, he had an emergency did he and had to leave?

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, go on!

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, I am sorry. Mr. Speaker, the point I am making is that the Labrador Assembly would not conflict with the House of Assembly as I envisage it. Now, why should we do it for Labrador and not for the Northern Peninsula or the Burin Peninsula or Western Newfoundland? I mean, that can be a valid question.

MR. NOLAN: Or Foxtrap.

MR. ROBERTS: My friend from Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) says for Foxtrap. Sure. You know, that is a valid question. I think there is a valid answer to it. I think the needs of Labrador, the situation of Labrador is sufficiently different and sufficiently unique to justify this special additional step. As I said laws are made, constitutions are made to serve us not the other way around. If our constitution can be changed and improved, then let us change it. The constitution of this Province is a matter within the control of this House of Assembly. We could have proportional representation if we wanted it in this House and not our present system of single member constituencies with the first man past the post. If we wanted it we could do it. We could have - we cannot change the office of the Governor and we cannot change the distribution of powers between here and Ottawa, but anything else in our constitution as a Province we can change.

AN HON. MEMBER: Vote through our legislation to constitute change.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes if the government of this Province wants to bring it in and this House approves it, we can elect - if my party gets forty-

MR. ROBERTS:

five per cent of the vote it would be entitled to forty-five per cent of the members or whatever -

MR. J. WINSOR: It is used in other places.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes a number of countries use it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: A Province can change its own constitution any time so long as it does not conflict with the BNA Act.

MR. ROBERTS: In fact I believe British Columbia once had proportional representation using the single transferable vote.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The alternative vote.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. PECKFORD: On a point of order - not even a point of order really and I do not want to pretend that it is. The hon. Leader of the Opposition has been given leave and I would appreciate if he would keep as relevant to the point as he can because I am very interested in them but I think that he would appreciate -

MR. ROBERTS: Well I am grateful. I thank the hon. gentleman. He is right. And I was trying to respond to, I think, a very good question but nonetheless a question which is not directly related. The point is if we want to create a Labrador Assembly by an act of this House we can do it. We have that power. You know, we could specify its constitution, its rules the same as the rules of the elections to this House are under the authority of an act of this House. I think it is something we should look at. I am not saying it is the answer. I am not saying it has not got flaws but I think it is something to be looked at and that is why I put it forward.

Mr. Speaker, a Labrador Assembly as I see it would have no executive or governmental authority. It would have no power to make or to implement decisions. It would have certainly the power to make decisions. If we wanted to create a body that could make decisions, that could act in an executive sense, then we would have to look at another alternative, and that is the concept of regional government. Now the Labrador Advisory Council is sort of midway between really, and it is neither fish nor fowl. It is a good first start but that is all it is in my view.

MR. ROBERTS:

So I do not think it is much of a precedent. Either, you know, directly elect with every citizen going and voting and electing. Maybe we could try proportional representation. Maybe it would be individual constituencies. You know, you could do it a lot of ways. You could have indirect elections through councils. But the regional government, Sir, is a far different idea, a fairly simple one to state. It would involve the creation in Labrador of a new level of government,

MR. ROBERTS:

a level midway between the government of the Province and the governments which now function in Labrador and elsewhere throughout the Province, namely, municipal governments. I may say that I think it is generally agreed that if the idea works in Labrador it should certainly be looked at for large parts of this Island. There is no law saying that all power has to be concentrated in St. John's. Over the years there have been significant diminutions in the day to day power of the government and it has improved government.

When I was Minister of Health, Sir, we ran as the department almost every government owned hospital in the Province with the exception, I believe, of the General and I sponsored a piece of legislation in behalf of the government called the Hospitals Act, a very good piece of legislation that withstood the test of time. And under that the policy was implemented of putting hospitals out and I guess almost every hospital is now run by a local board. I think that has been an immense step forward. It has not in any way diminished the authority or the power of the Department of Health to do the things which it ought to do. But it has improved significantly the delivery of services, medical services, to the people in the area. I do not think anybody would quarrel with that.

Well we can do that perhaps with regional government. There are a number of questions though that we have to look at. You know, the first one, the obvious one, the geographic scope, do we have one for all of Labrador or do we have more than one? Then we have got to look at the other two aspects of any government. What powers it would have and how would it be financed? They are easy to ask. They are not easy to answer. For example, would the regional government have the same powers that municipal governments now exercise? Would it have some of those, some of the provincial government's powers? There are many, many questions and many decisions that must be taken.

Then there is the question of financing. I rather like the idea of block grants. If we are going to produce \$5 million for Labrador, for say the installation of municipal water and sewer

MR. ROBERTS:

systems in a year, we would say to the regional government, "All right, you decide. We can find you \$5 million, we decide." My party debated this in Gander on the weekend and you know, the sounding there from the whole party was very much in favour of that idea.

AN HON. MEMBER: The county system.

MR. ROBERTS: The county. Well it can be in many ways like a county system, yes. I will not go into municipal government but in this Province we went from nowhere to everywhere in municipal government without going through the evolutionary stage of counties or large - we are probably the only part of Canada that does not have an intermediate system of government.

But in any event there is the idea in rough form with just a few of the questions sketched and a few possible answers. You know, I would need a lot more time than I am allowed or than I should be allowed to deal with it in detail.

MR. SIMMONS: It sure is a place is experiment with the county system.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, you know, if we want to look at a county system in this Province perhaps Labrador could be the priority, the testing ground, the first area.

MR. PECKFORD: I do not think it would be a place for experiment.

MR. ROBERTS: You know the regional government plan obviously would be a very difficult one to implement. The questions of representation jurisdiction and financing would have to be resolved, and they are not going to be easy. Because of course let us not forget one fact, it does not put any more money in circulation. In fact, it would probably cost something to provide these extra positions, civil servants and what have you. You know, assuming taxes are no higher, and I am certainly not advocating that, nobody except possibly the Finance Minister feels that way, you know we are still looking at the same size of pie for the whole Province, to feed the people of the Province. All we are talking about is perhaps having the power to

MR. ROBERTS:

slice it, moved from St. John's to Labrador, in respect of the pieces of the pie that are going to go to Labrador.

But we are not suddenly going to have a magic increase in the amount of money available to us. But we are talking of giving the slicing authority a little closer to the people who consume it, to carry through with the metaphor.

Well Mr. Speaker, let me conclude. I have sketched five ideas. I think there are serious problems in Labrador and I began by saying that I am going on the premise that we must look at changes. And I think that change must come in one of the forms I have suggested. We might have a combination of them. They are not necessarily antithetical. But the five I think cover the full range of possible moves. We can go on as we are. We can set up a form of regional government. We can create a Labrador Assembly. We can set up additional bureaucratic and administrative machinery or we can move to split up the Province. I reject the first and I equally reject the last. I think the answer to the problem lies somewhere in between those two extremes, the two extremes of staying as we are or splitting up the Province. I think that is the challenge which confronts us.

I think that it is a very great challenge, Sir. I think that it is one which all of us in this House, in this Province, have got to

Mr. Roberts.

take seriously. A number of years ago Sir Harold MacMillan, then the Premier of Great Britain, made a speech in , I believe it was in South Africa, in Cape Town, and one line from that speech has passed into history, "The winds of change are blowing throughout Southern Africa." It is a very wise prediction because, of course, the winds of change were beginning to blow, and they have changed the map of Southern Africa. Well, Sir, the gales of change are beginning to blow throughout Labrador. And if we do not build wisely and strongly then those gales will destroy us. But if we do build wisely, if we can harness those great forces, then we can use them to build a better Province for all of us. I think, Sir, that should be our aim. That is the aim of, I believe, every member of this House. I know it is the aim of those of us on this side. That is why my colleague brought in this resolution to have the debate and suggest a mechanism by which we could make some positive advances. That is why, Sir, I shall support the resolution. I hope that every member of the House does likewise.

SOME HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): The hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, I remember -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: - tomorrow is the 24th. March. Maybe a lot of members have forgotten who were in -

MR. SIMMONS: Everybody knows!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: For many of the group who were successful on the 24th. March, 1972, it is our fifth anniversary tomorrow.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I think that five years is a way of putting it. I would like to put it some time that it has been a lifetime in a way. It has been a long, hard grind, I think, for all of us during the five years.

MR. NEARY: Most enjoyable.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I remember the honour of seconding the Address in Reply, my first speech in the House sitting where my colleague, the hon. Minister of Fisheries now sits, in the session after the election and making a speech. I shall never forget that night because I did not sleep. I stayed awake all night to write the speech, because I was quite prepared to write a speech for the House of Assembly. I think I had visited the House two or three times. I was one of those people out there who thought the House was as irrelevant as they now out there feel of us in here, I suppose. But I remember the speech. But I remember one statement I made in it, and I think every time something good happens or something bad happens in respect to a request for something for Labrador, I remember it more accurately and the words went something like this: And it is not all give and take, where one side does all the giving and the other side does all the taking. And I have stood up in this House for a number of times on a small issue like the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador letterhead. I will tell you something right now, gentlemen of this House and people of this Province, it is a distinct embarrassment to me as minister of this government when there is legislation in this House and an order by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council that the letterhead shall read, The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Director of Printing Services has been told there is no letterhead in this Province to be done by the government services

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unless Newfoundland and Labrador are on it. But some, I guess, are done outside the building. And it is a distinct embarrassment to me. I say that to my colleagues as well as to the other side of the House, and every time it happens the hon. Leader of the Opposition stands up, and rightly so. I do not know. Maybe it is the letterhead - that there was too much printed years ago.

MR. SIMMONS: If the hon. minister would permit? The point he is on about the possibility that the letter was printed outside the Printing Services Division, is there any particular government directive or policy on that matter? No department is required to have its printing, its ongoing stationery done in the building, eh?

MR. ROUSSEAU: I do not know. Maybe it is some of the -

MR. SIMMONS: It is worth thinking about.

MR. ROUSSEAU: - maybe some of the stationery has been held over from the old days, and it still stands there as the Government of Newfoundland. I say to you that it is a distinct embarrassment. And I am getting -

MR. NEARY: Why do you not resign and help him.

MR. ROUSSEAU: No, I have another suggestion. If I for one minute - I think the

Mr. Rousseau:

Director of Printing and Photography is a good man, doing his job down there. And I think that at any time he has been under any pressure he as always come to me, and I think he has been doing his job. Now where this stuff is leaking in through I do not know, but I can assure hon. gentlemen it is a very distinct embarrassment to me, it is also a matter of principle with me that as long as I stand here, and I said that a year ago, that if I stand here I will stand here representing the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. If it is not the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador then I have a problem. And I made that point quite clear, and I think government has accepted it, and as far as government is concerned the official position is it is the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: And that is the way it shall be.

I would also like to make a point - some of the points that the hon. Leader of the Opposition made were quite good. He made one of the question of access to public services comparable to that of the Island. I would go a little further than that, and I would say that no person who lives in Labrador should be discriminated against as a member of this Province because he lives in Labrador. I would think that is a little further.

I know that there are many items that were mentioned here that I would like to talk to, but just let me give a few small examples of things that trouble the people in Labrador; not the big ones, there are so many big ones it is almost difficult to put your fingers on them. A couple of months ago we introduced in this Province the Atlantic Lottery. Through some unfortunate chain of events there was nobody appointed in Labrador to sell the tickets, but in any event, two or three days before the first Loto draw there were no tickets available in Labrador and I was inundated with calls from my district.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where you?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes, it is unbelievable. But that is a small thing. You know, people will say, "Are we a part of the Province?" That is the first thing. You know, "Do we belong to this operation that you have down on the Island part of the Province?" And they are not being facetious or sarcastic. They are asking a question, something that they feel. "Where are the Lots tickets? They are on sale on the Island, why are they not on sale up here?" Luckily I got in touch with the seller over in the Goose Bay area; he got over, and they did have their tickets just one day before. And now it is working out smoothly.

AN HON. MEMBER: They were going to Goose Bay?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes. But it shows the type of feeling and sentiment that people have in the Labrador section of this Province.

I could speak - and by the way I moved to Labrador by choice in 1962, I lived there continuously until 1974 at which time, when I became a member of Cabinet, after a year of commuting back and forth seeing my family, and many of the people felt that it was unfair to my family and I moved them out, I still maintain a residence, and I know the people up there in Labrador. It is a little different in Western Labrador, of course, you have such a turnover that a lot of people you have to get to know as new people, but a lot of the people are there since I have been there in 1962.

The question of licence plates. And I am not critical, I was Minister of Transportation at one time, and I think that is one thing when we talk about government services, we would love to have in both parts of Labrador - I mean when somebody from Labrador sends down an application for a licence plate and his fees and because it is \$1.00 short, the letter is sent back, and it comes down again, and you are talking of three weeks to a month to get a set of licence plates. You know, what do you expect? Frustration of the greatest magnitude.

MR. ROUSSEAU:

You know, I am not talking about roads, I am not talking about T.V., I am not talking about communications; I am not talking about the big things, I am talking about the small things, the things that agitate people in Labrador, agitating now. The people in my area are not happy with Ninety Minutes Live, Peter Gzowski. Now people who like Peter Gzowski have a right to watch Peter Gzowski. I do not deny them that right. But where there is no alternative to Peter Gzowski then people have a problem.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROUSSEAU: And the people in Labrador West do not want to sit down after getting off a shift or coming home from an evening out to sit down to Ninety Minutes Live, They like to watch a movie or a drama programme or something of that nature.

But you also have to understand that in the parts of Labrador that have television that life is not very flamboyant up there as it would be on the Island part of the Province. You cannot always feel that you can jump into a car and run somewhere, so the small things you have become very important to you. And a lot of the small things are missing, you know, late with the Loto ticket, licence plates, any number of things. The answer is it is just not up there for the people, they cannot find them.

As the hon. Leader of the Opposition said I have a public building in Wabush, and it is not fully staffed. We would hope now that the new plan that government is coming up with will staff - now Happy Valley-Goose Bay was

MR. ROUSSEAU: mentioned. But I have an understanding, at least I hope with my colleagues that that does not exclude the Labrador City - Wabush public building. I mean that goes without saying that we are going to have a few people over there.

I have, you know, in the five years I have run and I mean run, trot, not run as a politician, you still cannot seem to keep up with the demands. But I would like to say today I felt a little bit of glee, not too often you feel it, I appeared before the Public Utilities Board today to talk about the telephone rate increases in Labrador. And in 1974 I supported the takeover of the Bell Service, as it was then, by Newfoundland Telephone on the guarantee of improved services and on the provision that there would be no basic rate increases until the service was improved on a par with the Island part of the Province.

All of a sudden, a couple of weeks ago, somebody appears in my office, almost co-incidentally with the time they were making the public announcements suggesting that they were going to increase the rates in Labrador to the Island rates.

I went up today and I filed an intervention for that. It is unusual that a minister appears before the Public Utilities Board but today I felt it significant enough to do so. Because what they are doing is they are bringing our rates from what it is now up to the Island part in one fell swoop, which we do not agree with. We think it is unwarranted and unjustified. And let me say this to the hon. members of this House of Assembly, for my own district, the people in Labrador West are prepared to pay their own way and they do not want to take any social assistance or services or any handouts or any gratuities from anybody. We will pay our way and we will continue to do so and we have done so. But the principle under which that underlies, with no direct dialing with twenty rings, thirty rings, two and three

MR. ROUSSEAU: minutes waiting for an operator, it is just not up to par with the service on the Island.

So I made a sort of bold suggestion that either the Public Utilities Board adjourn the meeting and travel to Labrador, or postpone a decision and travel to Labrador and talk to the man in the street, not necessarily to the community councils and the Chamber of Commerce, to the man in the street. I was very happy today that Mr. Clarence Powell, the Chairman, agreed that if there was sufficient representation from people in Labrador, and not just that the service is lousy, for that they cannot go up on that, but people who communicate with the Board of Public Utilities and say, "I want to make an intervention on this rate increase," and they come in also with the fact that they want to make known to the board and I understand today, from what I understand from what he said, that the board is prepared to consider travelling to Labrador. Now I was talking on behalf of Labrador West in general, although I talked specifically with Labrador in general, and he is prepared to do so and certainly I would urge everybody in Labrador to make their feelings known and I think, as I said to him today, I have often said, there is going to be a revolution in this country if the Crown Corporations do not start to become responsive to the needs of people. It has happened at the federal level. I would hope it would never happen at the provincial level. And I felt very good today that the Public Utilities Board agreed that that would happen if sufficient representations came from Labrador, you know, possibly at the end of the hearings they can grant maybe an interim order, or whatever, but go to Labrador before a final decision is made. And I certainly hope they would do that.

I think that in the fifteen minutes I have, I am going to speak again next Wednesday, but in the fifteen minutes

MR. ROUSSEAU: I would like to talk for one minute on a very important thing that I should have done between May of 1973 and October of 1974. I went to my colleagues with documented evidence of the problems endured by the workmen in Labrador West, in Labrador and in this Province. And government consented, my colleagues, to appoint a commission of enquiry called the Bartlett Enquiry, Mr. Judge Rupert Bartlett was appointed commissioner. And that was not just a political enquiry, just so that I would look like I was doing something, that is a very meaningful and very important thing to me and I would say that in my five years thus far, in my opinion, it is

MR. ROUSSEAU:

the biggest thing I have done for Labrador West, and I hope Labrador and I hope for the Province as well. Because I want to serve notice on those people in Labrador West who employ people from outside this Province when there are people in this Province, locally in Labrador West, locally in Labrador and locally in the rest of the Province, available and qualified to work, that they are going to meet with some problem for the rest of my term. It would be my personal hope as an individual MHA - I am not speaking on behalf of government - that there is one company up there that I hope to run out of Labrador West. And if anything can be done in my power to run them out I certainly intend to do so. That is a company who might employ one or two Newfoundlanders at a time. He is non-unionized. Every time they try to unionize the gentleman he flies a plane load of people in from Seven Islands and the vote is rejected and he is not unionized. He is in Labrador City working. He is paying six dollars an hour for sixty hours a week. Across the border in Vermont, fourteen miles away, he is paying seven-fifty an hour and double time after forty hours.

I told the company to whom he is contracting that I want him out personally. I am speaking again as an MHA. There is a fine difference between MHA and Minister of Labour, but I am speaking as an MHA. He does not deserve, that company does not deserve to dwell in this Province.

MR. FLIGHT: Why does the government go along with it? Why do the people go along with that type of thing, Mr. Minister?

MR. ROUSSEAU: If anything has to happen between borders it should be done by accommodation first. If it can not be done by accommodation then you try the stick.

Now a few years ago Mr. Cournoyer, when he was Minister of Labour and I met with him, dropped the permit system. The permit system is a very nefarious scheme used in the Quebec construction industry whereby in order to work in the construction industry in Quebec you have to dwell for one year in the Province of Quebec and you are given a permit.

MR. ROUSSEAU:

If you do not have a permit, you cannot work. That was dropped after discussions with Mr. Cournoyer. Recently, about a year ago, they were reintroduced. Part of the terms of Mr. Judge Bartlett's Commission is to look at the possibility of work permits on this side of the border.

But worse still, five constituents of mine worked for a Summer in Fermont which is - in Mount Wright actually which is down in Fermont across the border - were summoned by the courts of Quebec and are now not able to travel - one constituent paid the fine, the other four have not. He is not able to travel through the Province of Quebec or else he is taken to court and I presume put in jail. We have tried everything possible -

AN HON. MEMBER: What was he fined for?

MR. ROUSSEAU: For working in the Province of Quebec without a permit. We have tried, I have tried everything possible through my colleague, the Minister of Justice. I have even talked to individual ministers that I met on federal-provincial ministerial conferences from Quebec and said, "Look fellows, let us play the game. I do not care what you have got in the rest of Quebec but in Fermont, Mount Wright, Schefferville, Gagnon, Sept Isles, Labrador City, Wabush, let us have some sort of an accommodation, let us understand each other because nobody wants reprisals."

I remember the days when I heard all the figures about Churchill Falls, eighty per cent Newfoundlanders. Remember those figures? Seventy-five per cent, eighty per cent Newfoundlanders? My eye seventy-five, eighty per cent Newfoundlanders! Seventy-five, eighty per cent of the hourly paid were Newfoundlanders. Maybe at best sixty per cent on that project were Newfoundlanders, at best. So I say to the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) who says, "Why now?", I just made the simple statement. It is something I should have done in 1973-1974. Okay! But it is not the mistakes you make but the ones you repeat.

MR. ROUSSEAU:

So they are going to look at this question. These are things that are unbelievable. A couple of months ago a company went in to do some refurbishing work in Labrador City. They are a Montreal based company. Nobody on the Island part of the Province knows this is going on because nobody is ever invited in to do this kind of work. The work goes to Quebec, by natural flow the work goes to Quebec. Nobody down here is invited to tender. It is a private company so there does not have to be a public tender. This gentleman goes in

MR. ROUSSEAU:

and hires four foremen in the construction trades, one Newfoundland and three French Canadians. I phoned him and told him how I felt about it, and I told him I took it as a slight to Newfoundland that he did not think there were three Newfoundlanders smart enough to become foremen, and we have lots of them down here unemployed. I phoned the company for which he was working. He phoned me back on a Saturday morning, and he told me how much trouble I had him in with the company. If I wanted his records I would have to subpoena them. And he was thinking of taking me to court for accusing him of discrimination in respect to workmen, which was all I needed at that point in time, believe me. So I suggested to the gentleman who was running this Province, and it certainly was not him. So I am going to subpoena his books with the Bartlett Commission, if that is the way he wants to play the game.

I had people at the Iron Ore Company of Canada project who have been dismissed for one reason or another over the years. These gentlemen live in Labrador City or Wabush. They get a job with a contractor and, lo and behold! when the contractor goes in on the IOC site these people are not allowed on the site, because they were dismissed. We had a Human Rights Commission a few months back on this, but again I hope in this session of the House that an amendment will be made to the Human Rights Code - it has been approved by Cabinet, I hope it is in the drafting stage - to make sure that the inalienable right that a man has to work wherever he can find work is upheld. These are just a few of the many problems one deals with in an area like Labrador West. Undoubtedly, and as my hon. friends and colleagues from the other parts of Labrador,

Mr. Rousseau.

the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie), and the member for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) and the member for the Straits (Mr. Roberts) have indicated, they have their problems. And I am merely touching - what I have talked for, I could talk for two hours and give you examples like that. One wonders where there is frustration in Labrador? One wonders why the people in Labrador have no faith in the Island part of the Province? When people on a picket line say, We are not going to St. John's to court, why do they not come up here, why should we go to Newfoundland? That may be one man, but that is a feeling that one man has up there. There may be more. "If they want us to go to court, let them come up to Labrador. Why should we go down to Newfoundland?"

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. ROUSSEAU: I am not saying - the court is immaterial. It is what they are saying. And people up there feel very strongly. And it is not the one or two or three or four or five or half dozen that many names are known by members of this House that we are talking about. There are many people up there. I have tried, My God! how I have tried to get it through heads across this Province - and I am not talking about government - across this Province to tell people to understand the people in Labrador. The people in Labrador West cannot understand why they are paying the taxes they are paying, and they are paying taxes, and they are paying big taxes, why they are not getting more back? And the people in Labrador West, I would say, has been one of the better districts in respect to returns, the public building, the stadium, \$750,000 - the government is supporting the Carol - Wabush Co-op - the Duley Lake Park. Everything up there is paved. Recreation grants have been given and on and on. I am talking about the material things

Mr. Rousseau:

that members look for. But that is not what these people in Labrador West are looking for. They are looking for some intangible - you know, it is almost impossible to put your hands on - some intangible to make them feel that, look, there is the Island, they are part of us, and we are part of them. And, you know, I made a statement one time that my hon. friend and colleague from Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) misunderstood. I said, "As long as I am in the government the name of the government will be the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador." I would like to be the first to stand up and say, it is going to be the Government of Newfoundland. Because then if I said that, I would know then that the people in Labrador felt a part of the Province of Newfoundland, which is the constitutional name for it.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Only for that reason I said it, and of course the hon. member at that time with the Heritage Society thought I was trying to get the name of the Province changed. But I wanted to say something to show what I was trying to do to enable the people to feel in Labrador a part of the Island part of the Province and they do not feel it. They do not feel it. How do you make them feel it? I do not know. There are so many answers, there are so many people up there studying Labrador, there are so many studies in Labrador that it is almost impossible for the biggest and best committee that anybody could put together to digest.

When you have to spend time in Labrador City and the telephone operators in Quebec go on strike and you cannot make a telephone call because they are tied in with the Rimouski exchange; and when you get a lady, a foreign accent on the other side of the line, who is oft' times very curt, sometimes bordering on sauce, it is not easy to take because they belong to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. French and English television, seven per cent, eight per cent officially of the people in Labrador West are French speaking. But I do not think they are French people. A lot of them have been in Labrador since the late 1950's or early 1960's. They feel part of this Province.

The hope I had of housing and an industrial park, the ability to retain the jobs that are now going down to Seven Islands by that nefarious name "contracting out" by the companies, the jobs that are being lost, whether the DREE industrial park will handle that or not I do not know. The fact that people who never worked for the companies could not find housing, no housing, paying \$300, \$350 in a basement apartment, if a fire started forget it, ball game over.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Now to my predecessor, who was then the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the present Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, we have been successful in building 141 housing units in Labrador City and 270 building lots in Wabush. That is the first opportunity that people have had in Labrador City and Wabush to secure their own housing.

MR. SIMMONS: While the minister is on that subject, I had occasion to drive by that new housing, I guess you would call it row housing. Can he just indicate if he is aware what the rationale was for that what I would call a monstrosity and I do not think he will find many, perhaps including himself, who would agree that the money appears to have been well spent. Now it is a layman's judgement. I am not a builder at all but I hear a fair amount of comment around there, almost of a joking nature. Now the comment generally is, "Certainly God, you know they could have done a lot better with the money than they are doing in this particular undertaking." Would he care to comment on that? I am sure he has picked up that comment too.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I think what happened, and the Minister of Mines and Energy might recall too, when the original bid came in for a greater number of houses the costs were astronomical. They came in much over the money available. We had hoped to get the money under a special section of CMHC, but we did not get it and we had to go back again and get it and we got as much money as we thought we needed but when the bids came in apparently they were really out of kilter because costs of construction in Newfoundland are much higher than they are in the rest of Canada. But in Labrador they are even much higher than they are in Newfoundland. So it was a matter of trying to get the most for the money you had because of the great and urgent and pressing problem of private housing up there. It may be a monstrosity but at this

MR. ROUSSEAU: point in time it is a start and after three and a half years of what I have gone through by making the initial mistake of announcing that I had a little bit of land that the companies were prepared to give me and for three years I never heard the end of it. I am satisfied with what I got. I am not happy with it but it is there. The mistakes we made we have learned from. As the hon. member says it is not very nice to look at, but there will be 141 units in which people can live and it will be based on apartments at very reasonable rental rates.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister will be continuing next day, I would assume. I wonder would the minister in particular undertake to comment on the rather curious set of circumstances which exist insofar as the IOC, CMHC arrangement is concerned, and the effect it has on tenants? I think he will agree that it is a unique situation in the Province and also just to make one final comment on what I call the monstrosity, I think the overall feeling was that, What a sin, so much land around us and here we are huddled together in a relatively small space.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Certainly I will, but in the meantime I adjourn the debate, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: It being six o'clock I adjourn the House until tomorrow Thursday, at 3:00 P.M. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, at 3:00 P.M.