

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, MAY 23, 1978

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The House met at 2:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. HICKMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I know the sympathies and deep feelings of all hon. members are today with our colleague, the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow), who lost two of his brothers during the weekend. The hon. member's brother, Dan Woodrow of Northern Bay, died on Saturday, May 20, and his brother, Mike Woodrow of St. George's, succumbed to a cardiac arrest on Sunday, May 21, whilst driving to Northern Bay to attend the funeral. Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a very sad occasion for the hon. member for Bay of Islands, for his family and the families of his brothers. I know hon. members on both sides of this House will join me in extending to them our sincerest sympathy during this time of bereavement.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to extend our deepest sympathy to the family of the Reverend Father Hubert Whelan, an assistant priest at the Basilica of St. John the Baptist, who died suddenly in St. John's yesterday. Father Whelan, who served in many parishes in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. John's, is survived by his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Whelan of Placentia, as well as three brothers, one of whom is Mr. Tom Whelan, the Deputy Minister of Public Works, and one sister. To all his family and friends my deepest sympathy in this time of bereavement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I were deeply shocked and saddened to learn today of the sad passing of two of the brothers of the hon. member for Bay of Islands, his brothers Daniel and Michael, and we join with the Government House Leader in extending our sincerest deepest sympathy and condolences to our colleague and to the members of the family.

And we also, Sir, would like to join also with the Government House Leader in expressing our deep sympathy to the family of the late Father Hubert Whelan, the assistant priest at the Basilica of St. John the Baptist in the Archdiocese who died suddenly, I believe, died at his parents home in Placentia over the weekend.

MR. MURPHY: At the residence, I believe.

MR. S. NEARY: I beg your pardon? In the residence here in St. John's. Well, Sir, we are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of the Reverend Father Whelan who happened to be a very personal friend of mine, who said Mass just about every Sunday morning for a year and a half or two years at Nagle's Hill at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish where I happen to go to church with my family every Sunday morning. And in addition to serving in the Basilica Parish, Father Whelan also served in the parishes of St. Patrick's here in St. John's, Mount Carmel, Cape Broyle, Ferryland and Rushoon. He is survived by his mother and father and sister and three brothers, as my hon. friend has just pointed out, one of whom is the Deputy Minister of Public Works. So, Sir, we extend our sincerest and deepest sympathy and condolences to our colleague and to the parents and the family of these people who passed away over the weekend.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of privilege has risen.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter affecting, I believe, my privileges as a member of this House. Your Honour knows as do all hon. members that this is the first time since I took my place in this House in November 1975 that I have risen on a matter of privilege. I do so now because I believe my privileges have been affected and if Your Honour finds that a prima facie case of privilege exists then I am prepared to move the appropriate motion at the appropriate time.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, April 17, 1978 while I was speaking in the Address in Reply debate, I tabled a letter written by the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Peckford) to one Ms. Dwyer of Baie Verte. The letter, which all hon. members have a copy of - I believe it was distributed - was in my opinion at that time callous and arrogant and contemptible. I took the minister to task for writing such a letter and I believe it was my duty to do so. Today, Sir, I received a letter from the Minister of Mines and Energy and since it affects my actions in this House I will also table that letter to the House. The letter that I tabled on Monday April 18 and the one that I am tabling today, neither one of them was marked private or confidential so therefore I will treat them as public documents and have no hesitation in laying them on the table of the House. That is point number one.

Mr. Speaker, the letter that I received today is addressed to me and it says the following: "I am writing you now regarding your recent tabling of a piece of private

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MR. RIDEOUT: correspondence from me to one Ms. Dwyer of Baie Verte. That letter was tabled out of the context of the previous correspondence and when I was absent from my seat in the House, I received no call from you or Ms. Dwyer to the effect that such a move was to be made. Such tactics are not at all honourable and I would expect better from a member of the House of Assembly. I would be pleased to have your apology or the handling of this matter."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the second point that I want to make and the most serious point is that part of the letter that I have just read and

Mr. Rideout:

which I will lay on the Table in a few minutes, which says, "Such tactics are not at all honourable, and I would expect better from a member of the House of Assembly."

Sir, I believe that this statement is an imputation of motives. If my tactics were not honourable then they must have been dishonourable. Since the imputation of dishonourable conduct arises because of actions that I took here in the House, on the floor of this House, then I would submit to Your Honour that my privileges have been questioned and affected and abused by the Minister of Mines and Energy.

Mr. Speaker, when I tabled the initial letter last Monday I gave the House the undertaking at that time in response to a question from the other side that I would Table all of the documents related to that letter. I now have those documents in my possession and I will, when I take my seat, lay the whole lot of documents, the four letters in question, on the Table of the House. The documents will show clearly, Mr. Speaker, and beyond doubt that the lady in question did not write any nasty or provocative letters to the minister. The only nasty, arrogant letter was the one that I tabled written by the minister to Miss Dwyer on May 3, 1978.

Mr. Speaker, the minister in his letter to me asked for an apology for my tactics, tactics that I used here in the House, not outside. I apologize, Mr. Speaker, to Miss Dwyer for having to be the recipient of such an arrogant and nasty letter from the minister of the Crown, and I apologize to the people of Baie Verte who have been so callously let down by the minister responsible for mining. But, Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the minister for my actions in this House, never will I do it.

I believe that the minister in his letter has undoubtedly questioned my motives. He has impugned motives of dishonourable conduct on my part, and I have no intention of taking that, Mr. Speaker, from any member of this House. As I said to Your Honour, I am prepared to move the appropriate motion if Your Honour considers it necessary once a prima facie case has been established. For the benefit of that, if Your Honour would ask the Page to bring this to Your Honour and all of the other documents that I will lay on the Table of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Name him!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I submit that the hon. member has not made a prima facie case as it relates to privilege of this House or of an hon. member of this House. If any of the phraseology or wording of that letter can be interpreted as obviously the hon. member has interpreted it as imputing motive on the hon. gentleman, I categorically state that the wording of that letter, in my opinion, does not impute motive. If it so does I absolutely and categorically say that I did not intend it to impute motive. What I intended and how I read the letter that I wrote and that I signed is that I deplored the methodology by which the hon. member publicized the letter from Mrs. Dwyer and failed to publicized other correspondence therefore giving a wrong impression of the overall circumstances of the situation. I in no way impute motive on the hon. gentleman. But I reiterate that in my view that it was extreme ,discourtesy and a wrong way about trying to disclose information between myself and a citizen of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: I have heard the hon. gentleman who made this submission, and the hon. the member who replied. I am in a position now to make a ruling on it. There is always a discretion in the Chair as to how much submission one needs hear. I think there are times when there is quite some complexity and the Chair even invites members, and there are times when the matter is not complex, and one submission from either side does satisfy it. So in my judgment that is the case here, that it is a matter not of great complexity. Having heard the hon. member who raised the point of privilege and the hon. gentleman toward whom the breach of privilege was alleged, the Chair is now in a position to make the ruling.

I would draw to the attention of hon. members, and I will read from page 100 of Beauchesne, and this is Section 110, and it is the last half of it, on page 100. "To constitute a breach of privilege a liable upon a member must concern his character or

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Mr. Speaker: conduct in his capacity as a member and the conduct or language on which the liable is based must be actions performed or words uttered in the actual transaction of the business of the House. Bad faith must be imputed and the charge cannot be

MR. SPEAKER:

indefinite." I draw particular reference to the stipulation that bad faith must be imputed and the charge cannot be indefinite. The words to which the hon. gentleman takes exception are, I think there are essentially two, one and the second part of a sentence, "I would expect better from a member of the House of Assembly." I would find it difficult to regard that as any breach of privilege, any hon. member's expectations viz - a viz another hon. member's are hardly matters of privilege unless that were to be followed by some statement which would impugn bad motive or make allegations of a serious nature.

The first part, and it is the one to which the hon. gentleman drew specific attention, "Such tactics are not at all honourable." Now I will refer back to Beauchesne again, especially to that reference that "Bad faith must be imputed and the charge cannot be indefinite." I cannot see that there is an imputation of bad faith in saying that the tactics are not at all honourable. He did not say that the hon. member was not honourable; there is no direct impugning or in my opinion even an indirect imputation of the hon. member's motives. There obviously is a very serious difference of opinion as to the nature of the tactics; there is obviously that, a very serious difference of opinion as to the nature of the tactics. And one could see that when there is some relevant motion before the House the matter could be debated on a motion broad enough, but I do not think that that allegation, "Such tactics are not at all honourable" fulfills the requirement of the imputation of bad faith because when one rules on a prima facie privilege what one is really doing is saying that this matter is of such a nature that it will take immediate precedence before all the other orders on the Order Paper. When one says there is no prima facie case, one is not saying the matter cannot be debated but one is saying it has to wait the calling of an appropriate motion to be debated. So I do not view that statement as of such a nature that it would take priority over all of the other Standing Orders on the Order Paper today.

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MR. NEARY: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. NEARY: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy a few moments ago, Sir, in speaking to a point of privilege made a false and incorrect statement in this House, that the press were not in possession of all the documentation in connection with the point of privilege that was just raised by my hon. friend. That is untrue, Mr. Speaker, It is a false statement, it is malicious, the press are -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I must ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw 'malicious! Whether it is false or not as long as there is no imputation of deliberate falsehood, but malicious I would have to ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw.

MR. NEARY: Well, I withdraw it, Sir, and I say to the hon. gentleman now and to the House that the press are in possession and have been in possession of all the documentation up to the letter received by my hon. friend, when was it? This morning, was it? - um to that point the press were in possession of all the letters and all the documentation. My hon. friend should withdraw that remark and apologize to the House or be named by Your Honour.

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

MR. SPEAKER: On the point of order, the hon. minister.

MR. PECKFORD: My statement was that the press did not have all the correspondence relating to the situation at that time when the hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) saw fit to release one of the letters that was sent to the person in question in Baie Verte at that time because -

MR. NEARY: Do not be playing with words. Apologize!

MR. PECKFORD: - members of the press came to me requesting additional correspondence -

MR. NEARY: Mr. Walsh came to see you did he?

MR. PECKFORD: - about the situation which proves that they did not have all the information. But nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, there is no point of order before the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The dispute is one of a question of fact, whether the press had certain documentation or did not have certain documentation. I do not see that there is a matter of the order of the House that I can deal with. They either have it or they do not have it, I do not know which, and I do not think it is a matter on which I can make any decision.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, it is not really, I guess, a Statement by Ministers I should be saying this on. I just wanted to apologize for being late, I was meeting with the new Deputy Minister of Fisheries from Ottawa and I just wanted to get up and officially go along with and be part of these two statements that were made earlier, one

PREMIER MOORES: in passing sympathy to the family of the Reverend Father Hubert Whelan, but even more particularly, the death of the two brothers of our colleague from Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow). I personally knew both brothers and I just want to go on record officially as being very sorry and to extend my own sympathy as well as that of the House. I just want to be on record, Sir, for saying that.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave of the House to present a petition on behalf of 332 residents of Port Blandford. The petition is sponsored by the Local Improvement district of Port Blandford. And to get right into the prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker, it says, "To the hon. House of Assembly; we, the undersigned residents of Port Blandford, strongly object to your government's spray programme, especially as it applies to the area near Port Blandford. All information we have at our disposal leads us to believe that there is a definite risk to the health of humans in a spray of this nature and the fact that your government is not prepared to do a full-scale programme lends support to this idea. We cannot understand what benefit it can be to Newfoundland to select 590 acres right on the doorstep of a community for that type of programme. There are lots of wilderness areas far removed from human habitation for experiments if they must be done for these reasons. We earnestly hope that your government will cancel this spray programme."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the main plea of this petition is that the government spray programme as it is applied to the Port Blandford area be cancelled.

MR. LUSH:

It certainly has a broader perspective, that the total programme be cancelled, but more specifically the programme as it applies to the Port Blandford area.

Mr. Speaker, aerial insecticide spraying has become a most controversial issue right across this land, and in view of the lack of any substantial evidence to support the effectiveness of spraying, indeed there seems to be much evidence to support the contrary that insecticide spraying is not very effective in controlling the spruce budworm, and also in view of the harmful effects that it has on human beings, then I think that the people of Port Blandford are justified in their concern. And it would seem almost a case of arrogance that the government would spray an area so close to a community. Mr. Speaker, at its furthest point the spray programme will be two miles from Port Blandford and at the closest point it will be six-tenths of a mile from the nearest home - so that is two miles from its furthest point and one-half mile from its closest point. Additionally, the spray programme is marked to the Northeast of Port Blandford and to the West of the boundaries there are also three major rivers- a watershed area - that flow right into the community of Port Blandford. Again, the Southwest River is the borderline for the spray programme. Then there is a river called Salmon River which is four miles away from the spray area flowing right into Port Blandford. Then the other river, the Northwest River, is five miles away. So here we have three rivers - a watershed area - and the town's supply of water comes from the watershed area flowing right into the town. So, as I said in the beginning, Mr. Speaker, the people of Port Blandford are justified in their extreme concern over this matter of

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MR. LUSH: spraying an area so close to their community, and particularly in view of the hazards to health that have been proven in certain quarters and in view of the lack of any substantial supporting evidence

MR. LUSH:

that this spray will control the population of the spruce budworm. Indeed there is a great amount of information stating that the spray that is being used, the spruce budworm spray does not indeed control the spruce budworm. Nova Scotia, they have now cancelled their spray programme because it was not very effective. New Brunswick -

MR. NEARY:

They did not start it.

MR. LUSH:

New Brunswick has been carrying on a spray programme since 1952 and again that they have got evidence that it is not controlling the spruce budworm at all, that still they are getting a lot of infestation. The Province of Quebec, they have been spraying since 1968, again with very little substantantive facts. And Manitoba, one province that carried on an experimental programme and they too find that the aerial insecticide spraying is not very effective. In view, Mr. Speaker, of the experiences of other sister provinces, I am wondering whether the government has looked very carefully into the effects of spray, into the usefulness of spraying and particularly, Mr. Speaker, when we are going to spray in an area so close as is the case here with reference to Port Blandford, and I would hope that the minister would accord the people of Port Blandford the same courtesy that he has done with the people in Gander and cancel the spray programme as it is now applied to the community of Port Blandford, coming within two miles of the community at its furthest distance, and within a half a mile at the closest distance.

I certainly hope that the minister would look into this and as I have said before, afford the people of Port Blandford the same courtesy that he applied the people of Gander, to allay the fears of the people of the Port Blandford area.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before recognizing the hon. member for

MR. SPEAKER: LaPoille, I would welcome to the House of Assembly, on behalf of all hon. members, thirty-eight grade eight students from Foxtrap Junior High, accompanied by two of their teachers, Mr. R. Wicks and Mr. R. Raymond. I know hon. members join me in welcoming these students to the House of Assembly.

The hon. member for LaPoille.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I support the petition so ably presented by my -

MR. MAYNARD: A point of order.

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

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the hon. member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) did not mean to mislead the House in any way. However, I must point out the fact that his statement in regards to Gander is not correct. I have not cancelled any programme in Gander, nor have I indicated that I was going to cancel one and I just want to bring that to the attention of the hon. member because I am sure he did not mean to give any incorrect information to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a matter obviously on which the Chair has any involvement.

The hon. member for LaPoille.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I support the petition so ably presented by my hon. colleague, the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush), Sir, on behalf of 332 residents of Port Blandford.

It is a very serious matter, Sir, that the hon. gentleman has raised and the people raise in the prayer of the petition. It is one of the most serious matters, Mr. Speaker, ever to be brought before this House, involving, Sir, the health of the whole community of Port Blandford. And as my hon. friend indicated, the same principle could be applied to other communities throughout the Province where spraying is to take place.

It is frightening, Mr. Speaker, when

MR. NEARY: you think that spraying will be done one-sixth of a mile from the community, two miles from the centre of the community of Port Blandford, Sir. It is frightening. And it is also frightening, Mr. Speaker, when you realize that the insecticide that is being used, Matacil, has never really been tested and the minister answering questions, Sir, in this House some time ago, informed the House when being questioned by members of the Opposition, that Matacil was only registered in the United States recently on a temporary basis and now it is going to be used in Newfoundland to make guinea pigs out of Newfoundlanders. It is really, Sir, a pilot project that they are carrying out here in Canada and the minister should reconsider and cancel the whole spray programme altogether.

Only this weekend, Mr. Speaker, I was out on the West Coast of the Province and

MR. NEARY: It was brought to my attention, Sir, that the Matacil is in barrels out on the tarmac out in Stephenville. There are no safety regulations. I am told that it should be stored indoors. It is stored outdoors. And what happens, Sir, when you get the blazing sun and the heat from the tarmac? Will these barrels burst and will the insecticide fly all over the place? No handbooks given to the people - only now the minister's officials are getting handbooks on safety ready in the minister's department. And the first week in June the spraying is going to take place. Mr. Speaker, the government do not realize what they are doing. They do not know what they are doing in this particular case, Sir, when they go within one-sixth of a mile of the community of Port Blandford. There will be other petitions. Mr. Speaker, I forecast now in this House there will be other petitions in connection with this spraying programme that has been so irresponsibly decided upon by the administration. Mr. Speaker, I would not mind it so bad if the alternatives had been explored, like they did in Nova Scotia. My hon. friend pointed out that in New Brunswick they have been spraying for over twenty years and they still have not done anything with the spruce budworm. As a matter of fact, the situation is worse. They are now producing in New Brunswick a super budworm. My hon. friend sneers and laughs at that, but that is true, Sir.

MR. MURPHY: These are not the facts.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman does not have the facts. The hon. gentleman cannot tell us the consequences of Matacil upon the health of the people of this Province.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I must require hon. members on both sides to observe the rule that there

MR. SPEAKER: should be no interruptions when another hon. member is speaking. And I think that that is a rule, the observance of which should be universal every day and without the Chair being required to repeat it.

MR. NEARY: I thank Your Honour for the protection of the Chair.

Mr. Speaker, people are scared and frightened and uneasy in this Province at the present time about the decision of the government to go ahead with this spraying programme without exploring the alternatives, Sir. In Nova Scotia, Premier Regan made an announcement some time ago that they were going to cut the wood that had been affected by the spruce budworm and that they were going to step up their reforestation programme. They were going to cut down the dead wood either for export - and I believe they are having some problems exporting it - but they could use it in the sawmills, use it in the paper mills, stockpile it. And here we are, Sir, out here with a linerboard mill closed down because they have no wood. The alternatives, Sir, have not been investigated, and before the government got into this spraying programme they should have explored the alternatives and gone to the Government of Canada and tried to make a deal to build roads into the wooded area that has been damaged by the spruce budworm where we have five million cords of wood that will be lost to Newfoundland forever unless it is cut in the next two or three years. The wood, Sir, could be exported, it could be used in a linerboard mill, it could be used in the sawmills that are closing down all over this Province because they are not allowed to go in on the Bowater and Price property to cut wood. And here is the wood damaged by the spruce budworm and it will be lost to Newfoundland forever unless it is

MR. NEARY: cut in the next two or three years. Some of it we cannot salvage at all. It is too far gone, and the time has run out. I understand it is a five year period, Sir, in which that wood has to be cut.

I would like for the government, Sir, to reconsider this matter of spraying. I, personally - and I am not speaking for my party - I think everybody should be freed up in this House to vote according to the dictates of his own conscience in connection with this spraying programme. I, personally, am against it because the government have not investigated the alternatives. And the alternatives are lying right on our doorstep in our sister province of Nova Scotia. So, Mr. Speaker, I support the petition and I do hope the government will reconsider this very grave and serious matter that could very easily, Sir, not only kill the wildlife and affect the environment in this Province, but injure the health of hundreds, literally thousands of Newfoundlanders where the spraying is going to take place.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I find no difficulty in rising to support the petition so ably presented by my colleague from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush), and so ably supported by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), and I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that this is not going to be the last petition which will be presented in this House with regard to the spray programme.

It has been indicated in this House since this session started, Sir, and since we realized that there would be a major, massive spray programme, that this should be the subject of a

Mr. Flight:

full scale debate. The people in this Province are frightened. They have had no input at all in the government's decision to spray. They know the government is using a chemical, Matacil. And I hope that the Minister of the Environment rises in this debate to assure the people of Newfoundland that the Department of the Environment is aware of what will happen when Matacil is sprayed in this Province.

The minister's department is being criticized as to whether or not the programmes will even be monitored this year adequately. I would like to hear the minister indicate as to what just plans are within the Department of the Environment for the monitoring of that spray programme this year. Mr. Speaker, we are not aware of the side effects of the chemical that is being used. The government refused to use the chemical that their own Committee on the Spruce Budworm Spray Programme recommended, and instead selected a chemical that they categorically recommended should not be used due to a lack of awareness on the side effects of Matacil on both the off target organisms or for that matter human health.

Mr. Speaker, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) indicated that government have not to this point - and certainly if they have, they have not convinced the public of Newfoundland - that they have considered the alternative to a spray programme. A spray programme is irreversible; after we have sprayed the black spray the damage, if there is any, is irreversible. You cannot take it back. And, Mr. Speaker, the minister should indicate when he stands up what were the criteria for establishing the blocks we are going to spray. Who designated a block within one-sixth of a mile of Port Blandford knowing full well that the water supply of that town would be subject to spray?

MR. NEARY: The paper companies.

MR. FLIGHT: Direct target spraying, not drift, not the possibility of drift, but designated an area that is one-sixth of a mile from a town and a town water supply.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, we have got sawmills in this Province shutdown, we have got 5 million or 6 million cords of wood dead or moribund on the stump. The minister has not indicated to this House at any time why he has not choose some of the alternatives. No salvaging programme announced. No reforestation, plans for reforestation. He talks about a reforestation programme. Most of the dead wood and the wood to be sprayed is on Price and Bowaters limits. And there is no reforestation programme under practice today with those paper companies. Natural revegetation is the only thing that they are aware of.

Now why it is that the minister has refused up to this point to allow the people of Newfoundland to get involved in that decision? Why it is that the Minister of the Environment is not prepared to relieve the fears of the hundreds of thousands of people who will be affected by this spray programme? Why it is that the minister has refused to discuss the alternatives and refused to accept the fact that Nova Scotia has taken a stand against spraying, when Nova Scotia's problem is dramatic or worse than ours? Why it is that the minister will not acknowledge that the forests of New Brunswick today are in a worse mess than they ever would have been without a spray programme. The hon. Minister MacLean of Nova Scotia indicated that after twenty-five years spraying that the forests of New Brunswick is not the envy of anyone who would practice good forest management. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that we are into an irreversible, dangerous situation. This is not going to be the last petition, and the government is going to have some explaining to do to all of the people of this Province and particularly the areas around which they have designated their spray areas. The minister has not answered the question, Mr. Speaker; neither the Minister of Forestry or the Minister of the Environment have involved the public of this Province enough into this spray programme. And he is going to find out that they are concerned enough that before the spray programme is over this Summer he is going to have one terrible can of worms on his hands; that you are going to have people both inside the areas that have been sprayed, people living in the confines or on the limits that have been sprayed, as well as the general public

MR. FLIGHT: of Newfoundland up in arms over this programme and the ways they have approached it as an open invitation to anyone who wants to oppose it, Mr. Speaker, the spray programme has been designed to this point, and it has been considered almost in a secretive attitude.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Ill-conceived.

MR. FLIGHT: - Ill-conceived. We have had none of the answers that the public around this Province have been asking. This is the place for the answers. Mr. Speaker, there should be a full-scale debate. And until the minister is in a position to indicate to the people of Newfoundland just what the implication of this spray programme is then he should direct his authorities to the Department of Forestry to hold off on a spray programme. We are doing something that we do not know what the answer is, and we are jeopardizing the health of our people, we are jeopardizing our whole ecology for something that can at best have a short-term effect.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister to reconsider his spray programme, not only in the area that is so vividly pointed out by the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush), but in all of Newfoundland until we know what we are getting into.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, I too am concerned. I am pleased to support the petition so ably presented by my colleague from Terra Nova on behalf of the people of Port Blandford. The West Coast of the Province is an area which will be receiving massive spraying in the coming months and already in that area the groups and people are becoming quite concerned about what is happening in the area. One thing that bothers me particularly about the application of spraying, and it is a question to which the minister might address himself when he stands to support the petition or to speak on the petition, is whether there will be warnings for people who will be in the woods, for campers, because in those particular areas on the West Coast as the minister knows there are many salmon rivers, there are many areas outside the provincial parks where people camp and at any given time during the Summer months, particularly on good days, people will be in the woods and I do not think I would like to be there myself with my family and small children, and I do not think the general public should be subjected to spraying. I think that there must be warnings through the media and in the press, advanced warnings as to when particular areas are going to be sprayed. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but in addressing myself more specifically to the Port Blandford problem I understand that one of the studies done here in Newfoundland last year showed that only about twenty to thirty per cent, under given conditions, of the spray actually ended up on the ground, depending on wind velocities, and even on calm days when there was no wind, warm days the finer particles of spray still do not - they sort of rise with the rising air and the people who test it or checked it to see what percentage of the chemical would be found on the ground afterward found anywhere from, with a twenty ounces per acre spray, found 2.8 to 12.8 ounces in these particular areas. Now these figures were figures that were given me. However, the minister cannot deny that a great percentage of that particular chemical is not recovered and that

MR. HODDER: means that it drifts elsewhere.

Just one other thing that I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, about this whole problem is that I think it is a joke, I suppose, a Newfie joke, that while the Linerboard mill, the Labrador Linerboard mill was going down because of a lack of a cheap wood supply, and while we were paying \$104 a cord, and while the government was supposedly trying to find a cheap source of wood supply and negotiating with the two paper companies in this Province, and particularly the fact that the spruce budworm attacked the West Coast first and has been there for the last four or five or six years and that is where the most damage has occurred and that is where Bowater's limits are, while we were taking wood from Crown land and from Southwest Brook and a couple of areas, and wood from Central Newfoundland and wood from Labrador, the government was supposedly negotiating with Price and Bowaters and the paper companies were saying, "No, you cannot come onto our land. We will not transfer blocks of wood to you." And while the government was saying, "We will close the Linerboard mill because the cost of wood is too great," all of this time the spruce budworm was insidiously taking and killing the wood and now nobody has the wood; the mill is closed and nobody has the wood.

Mr. Speaker, I think we are too late, I do not think we should have started this spraying, I think two years ago we should have been cutting out the stands that were attacked, they should have been used in that Linerboard mill, and I also think that instead of the spray programme we should have embarked on a harvesting programme to provide some jobs. My particular district was one where the people were working in the woods with Labrador Linerboard Limited and then were the first to go; they did not get any severance pay or anything. But the thing is they were the first to go, the year before the mill closed when they stopped cutting. I also believe I have never seen forest improvement techniques of any sort here in this Province and I think that that is the way we should have taken instead of spraying when we do not know what we are doing with the spray and we do not know what the spray is doing to us.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde followed by the hon. gentleman for Conception Bay South.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation at all in supporting the petition presented by my colleague, the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush), on behalf of 332 residents of Port Blandford. And, Sir, I do so not necessarily as an M.H.A. or even as a member of the Liberal Party, but because of my knowledge of biology and chemistry, having been a biology and chemistry teacher, both at the high school and the university level.

Now, Sir, one of the first things you learn about any kind of a drug or an insecticide that you are going to try out on insects or human beings is that these drugs or medications, or insecticides in this case, are subjected to the severest of clinical or laboratory tests, the severest.

Now, Sir, I have not had any indication from any hon. member opposite or the minister, to what extent Matacil or Aminocarb, whatever you want to call it, has been subjected to the severest of laboratory tests in order for it, number one, not to be used at large, but to be used experimentally in the field. That is the way the thing progresses. You come up with a new insecticide, you test it first in a laboratory under the most strenuous conditions, controlling all the factors, and then and only then do you subject it to the field. And, Sir, if there are questions still unanswered, which there are certainly questions unanswered with respect to the effects of Matacil, if there are still questions to be answered during these field experimental setups, the last thing you do, Sir, is to conduct an insecticide experiment next to a human population.

MR. FLIGHT: Guinea pigs.

MR. F. ROWE: Next to a human population, Sir.

Is it one-sixth or six-tenths -

MR. NEARY: One-sixth.

MR. F. ROWE: One-sixth of a mile from Port Blandford they are going to take Matacil or Aminocarb, very little known about it, and they are going to spray it. Now, Sir, anybody knows what the wind conditions are like in this particular Province. Heavens only knows where it is going to drop, what water supplies, in the river itself, watersheds, right on the human population, and besides that, Sir, even with the calmest days here in this Province, we all know that there is a severe wind or heat updraft, and not only are the pilots lives in danger under these circumstances, but Heavens knows where this insecticide, Matacil or Aminocarb, lands in the final analysis. We do know that something less than thirty or forty per cent land on the target area. The question is, Sir, where does the other seventy or sixty per cent land?

Now I would submit, Sir, that this Aminocarb has not been subjected to the proper field experimentation. I do not know so much about the lab or clinical experimentation.

MR. FLIGHT: None at all.

MR. F. ROWE: None at all, my colleague says. But one thing we do know, Sir; where this insecticide has been used where the spruce budworm has been sprayed, the egg mass count has in fact increased rather than decreased in the case of New Brunswick, is it?

MR. NEARY: Yes.

MR. F. ROWE: It actually increased.

MR. FLIGHT: Nova Scotia has not sprayed -

MR. F. ROWE: Nova Scotia, where they are not using the spray, Sir, the egg mass of the spruce budworm is decreasing. Sir, I submit that this government sat on its posterior extremity watching the budworm taking over the forests of this Province and all of a sudden find themselves backed into a corner where they have to take some drastic action.

MR. NEARY: Panic. Panic.

MR. F. ROWE:

And it is a panic action, I would submit, in using this spray that is not proven to do the job in the killing off of the spruce budworm and the salvation of the forests, and my colleagues have mentioned the other alternatives that can be used. But, Sir, as a former biology and chemistry professor and teacher, not only do I see the fact that the proper field experiments have not been carried out in isolated areas away from human population, and if at all possible away from other animal population, but it puts a great amount of fear in me, Sir, in not knowing what the side effects of this particular insecticide will be.

Sir, we may not know whether there will be changes in the blood structure, the bone structure, the nervous system or what have you. This generation, the next generation, the third generation, every day they are turning up with simple things like saccharin, where they learn that there is a cancer causing mechanism in the third generation of mice.

MR. F. ROWE: Here we are, Sir, taking a very dangerous insecticide a dropping it right down on Port Blandford.

MR. NEARY: When there are other alternatives.

MR. F. ROWE: When there are other alternatives, Sir, I submit, Sir, that any member opposite-the Minister of Health. I wish we could hear from the Minister of Health on this.

MR. NEARY: He has already made his -

MR. F. ROWE: I wish we could hear from the hon. member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey), who is himself a doctor, and the hon. member for St. John's South (Dr. Collins) -

MR. NEARY: - statement where he said -

MR. F. ROWE: - who, Sir, are not learned gentlemen in legal phrase but learned gentleman in the scientific sense and they know what experimentation is all about, and I feel if they speak sincerely from their heart that they have no other choice but to support this type of a petition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise happily and unhappily in a way to support the petition signed by 332 members or residents of the Port Blandford area as submitted and tabled by my hon. friend for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush). There is no way that any thinking person could surely support this kind of raining, allegedly for benefit for this Province, from the skies on the people of this Province without asking some very very serious questions. How can you? It has nothing to do with whether you are PC, Liberal, NDP or anything else. It is a matter that we may very well-information not merely from members of the House of Assembly but from others as well in scientific studies that have been made public in various parts of North America that there is a very serious threat to human

MR. NOLAN: life. Are we to stand here in this House on our political haunches and say that if the real effects of this will not be noticed for three or four years down the line we are going to be out of office so what difference does it mean? It is a pretty callous situation.

MR. NEARY: And the one industry probably will be destroyed because -

MR. NOLAN: Exactly. Some very strong doubts have already been expressed whether this is going to be that much benefit, although we see that according to the minister's statement that the decision was reached in full co-operation and consultation between officials of my department-meaning the minister's - and also officials of the two paper companies.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. NOLAN: Now I am not one to stand to dismiss the pleas of the paper companies. I am aware that they employ people and God knows we need more employment in this Province. But how much is a job worth in terms of human life? All the studies and the information that has been available to us indicates quite clearly that there are other methods, other alternatives that have to be looked at. There should have been a great public discussion and may I say that somehow through the press of this Province, beyond doubt it is not a very pleasant broadcast or through the newspapers to make each day, but every time any area of this Province is to be sprayed the people should be warned that this - what do you call it? - Matabil is going to be dropped tomorrow morning. What we are going to need are some human bomb shelters to get out of the way of the spray that the hon. gentleman-he is going to be known as the Forestry High before all of this over. Look at the figures on dust spraying work, Mr. Speaker; Cape Breton, Nova Scotia 1977 no spray, New Brunswick, where they did spray, 13 out of 15 counties sprayed. In Nova Scotia, no cost; New Brunswick, \$9 million cost. Egg mass counts in Nova Scotia, egg mass counts in New Brunswick. Down 60 per cent in Nova Scotia where there was no spraying, up 40 per cent

MR. NOLAN: where there was spraying in New Brunswick. The State of Maine has cancelled it completely, wiped it out. Are they all mad and we are the only sensible ones now alive on the North American Continent? Do we have all the knowledge? Who is putting the muscle on the minister? Certainly not the citizens of this Province belting on his door demanding, "spray me! spray me!" He will be sprayed before this is all over. The unfortunate part about all of this, Mr. Speaker, is he will not be the only one to suffer. And I say that every thinking person in this Province, and every class that is still in existence before the schools close should make a point of doing some at least basic research and express their opinion, either through the media, through the members of the House of Assembly or what other forum is open to them. But they should not sit back like poor dumb beasts and be sprayed and that is exactly what is happening here. "The decision to release large quantities of a poison, be it an insecticide, herbicide or whatever to protect man or a portion of his environment is a political decision and the

MR. NOLAN: public has the right to know the facts about the associated benefits and risks." P. D. McTaggart Cowan, National Research Council of Canada, perhaps we should reject his opinions also.

So I hope, Mr. Speaker, that we will pay attention to the plea. Maybe it is not the largest petition ever presented in this House of Assembly - 332 - but it may very well be as we go down the road a year or two, it may very well be that historically researchers will say this was the petition that members of this House of Assembly, and in fact all the public, should have come to the aid of for if we do not do it now it may very well be too late. I notice that the areas according to the press release - unless one of my colleagues took it from me, and I suspect he did - I do not believe the minister is going to do us the great honour of dropping his Matabicil on the Avalon Peninsula, is he?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no!

MR. NOLAN: No. He is going to go to Clarenville though - Gambo, Gander, Lewisporte, Milltown, Bishop's Falls, Springdale, Roddickton, Port Saunders, Pynn's Brook, St. George's, commencing on Monday, May 15, 1978.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the minister has not heard the last about this. And again, members on all sides are certainly going to have to address themselves to this problem, Mr. Speaker. We certainly support the petition of our hon. friend.

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

MR. McNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of the petition so ably presented by my hon. colleague from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush).

MR. McNEIL:

I can understand the concern of the people from Port Blandford about health and safety with the application of the spraying programme.

And to give an example, in my own district where one of the sites are located, this weekend I checked to see if the site was being set up with regard to health and safety measures. I came across a safety manual for aerial application of pesticides, and in that manual it is stated that pesticides should be stored inside in a well ventilated storage area, away from direct sunrays. And when I went on the site the barrels that contained the insecticide were stored on the ramp and in the heat of the sun you could hear the cracking and see the fumes coming away from the barrels. Here is the picture. If you need it I will put it on the table of the House. The barrels were badly damaged - leaks in the barrels, you could see the spray coming out over the sides of the barrels. And in the safety manual it is stated that the barrels should be checked regularly for leaks, and if there were any leaks that they be stopped. Also on the site there was no warning, no signs warning the general public that the area contains insecticides dangerous to health. And the location of the site is near a residential area on the Harmon complex. And the manual also states that in the opening of these barrels and the mixing of the chemicals you should be aware of any drift. With any type of wind whatsoever it will go into the residential areas where the children are playing.

I also checked with the fire department in case of a fire, whether they could handle the fire if there was an outbreak. They did not even know the quantity of insecticide stored in the area.

The hospital did not know what way they would be able to treat it. They said that they

MR. McNEIL: would probably just treat it as in any other way. And according to the manual, every different insecticide should be treated a little differently.

I came back today and I called the Department of Forestry and asked them for a safety manual so that I could send it out to the area to the people, and they could not provide me with one.

I would ask the minister that if he is going to spray that he would notify the people of the hazards with the spraying programme.

I think the government made a gigantic mistake in their decision last year to close the Linerboard mill when they knew that we had a very serious budworm problem. The minister stated himself that the spraying programme is only a stopgap measure, and I think if they had chosen the other alternative of harvesting, it would give them enough leeway to keep our plant in operation - we probably could have found a buyer while the plant was operating, we could have kept people employed. Right now it is just one catastrophe after another with the major part of our population leaving the area completely. And it is not bad enough that they are leaving! The ones who are staying they are going to

Mr. McNeil: try to poison them.

Mr. Speaker, I support the petition, and I do hope that the minister will support the petition and object to the spraying in the Port Blandford area.

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

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my support to this petition so ably presented by my colleague for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) on behalf of, I believe, it is 300-and-some-odd residents of Port Blandford. Mr. Speaker, we have had enough said in this House this afternoon for the government to seriously reconsider the stand that it is taking on this spraying programme in this Province this year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: When it comes to a government's spraying programme coming within six-tenths of a mile, I believe, of the community of Port Blandford we do not know how close it is coming to other communities across this Province, but we do know one specific instance where the people have made it their business to find out, coming within six-tenths of that particular community at its closeness point, two miles away from the community at its farthest point, and knowing as little as we do, Mr. Speaker, about this spray Matacil that this Province is using certainly that is enough for us to stand up and take our senses from what we are doing in this Province with regards to spraying.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if there was any hard concrete evidence that by using this spray Matacil and by embarking on this spray programme that we would be doing something legitimate to counteract the movement of the spruce budworm across this Province then we may have some sort of an argument. But we know that is not the case in New Brunswick. They have had twenty-six years of spraying and they are running away worse than ever with the infestations from the spruce budworm. We know that the same thing has happened in the State of Maine, and I think we have seen some evidence of where it is happening in British Columbia and in the Province of Quebec also. Then we have another Maritime province who having looked at all of the alternatives decides that it will be of no use to that province to embark on such a spraying programme, yet this Province in all of its

Mr. Rideout: glory is embarking on this spray programme this year. Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely ridiculous what we are proposing to do.

Now I heard in a news story today, Mr. Speaker, that the Gander Air Traffic Controllers, for example, one of, I suppose, the most highly professional groups certainly in the country, in this Province, in any part of the country, are thinking, I do not know if it is reported correctly or not, but are thinking about not working while those spray aircrafts are spraying around this Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, there has to be a reason for it. And the obvious reason is that some of the side affects of this insecticide Matacil is dizziness, and people going unconscious and so on, -

AN HON. MEMBER Nervousness.

MR. RIDEOUT: - and nervousness. And those air traffic controllers, who are professional people supposed to be controlling the airways, the skyways across this Province, do not want to have the added burden added to their burdensome task as it is, of controlling airways with pilots going around probably under the influence of this drug Matacil. Mr. Speaker, it is almost unbelievable.

MR. NEARY: The aircraft coming in from overseas (inaudible)

MR. RIDEOUT: It is almost unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. I have seen documentation that has said there have been a number of airplane crashes, for example, in New Brunswick where they have used this spraying programme, and some of it can probably be attributed to the facts that I have already mentioned, the dizziness and so on and the unconsciousness that this type of spray of insecticide brings about. It is unbelievable that we would embark on that type of programme in this Province with the little bit of experimentation that went into it last Summer. It is unbelievable that we would do it in view of the experimentation that has gone into this drug Matacil.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the question, are we gone out of our minds, for goodness sake? I think it is time for the minister not to get his back up on this particular issue -

AN HON. MEMBER: We want to protect the forests, too.

MR. RIDEOUT: Of course, we want to protect the forest, but we also want to look at the alternatives, and we firmly believe there are alternatives. And I think it is time for the minister not to get his back up and dig in his heels, but to have another look at this spray programme, to have another look at the implications of it for the people of this Province, and more especially have a look at it in areas like Port Blandford, and I am sure there are dozens of other areas around the Province where we are going to be spraying, practically, Mr. Speaker, on the doorsteps of the people.

Mr. Speaker, I support the prayer of the petition and I hope that the minister will rise in his place and let us know. And I also say this, Mr. Speaker, one of the most important things to ever happen in this Province, and we have not as yet had an opportunity to debate it in this House of Assembly, despite the fact that I believe the Premier gave us some indication months ago, or first when we opened, that there would be a special debate on the spray programme in this House.

MR. NEARY: Now he is bellyaching about the decorum of the House.

MR. RIDEOUT: One of the most important things we could be discussing, certainly all members could add something to it, I think we ought to have that opportunity but no, Mr. Speaker, do it with as little consultation as possible so that there will be least fuss as possible, never mind the affect that it may have on the population of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I support the prayer of the petition and hope that the government will act on it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (DR. J. COLLINS): The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. R. MOORES: Does anybody else want to speak on that petition? This is a new petition. Are you going to say anything on this?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: The minister is going to put out a -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Is the hon. member presenting a new petition?

MR. R. MOORES: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: What a coward!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. NEARY: What a coward! Spray the people! Spread the poison!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! One hon. member at a time has the right to address the House.

The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. NEARY: No wonder we reduced your salary to one dollar. You should be ashamed of yourself.

MR. R. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise to present a petition -

MR. SIMMONS: Oh! You are on a new petition, are you?

MR. R. MOORES: Yes, I am.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, my friend is on a new petition. I want to support -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I had indicated that the hon. member was about to present a new petition and when no one rose I recognized the hon. member.

The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. R. MOORES: In all fairness, Mr. Speaker, I will yield to my colleague.

MR. SPEAKER: This would be with leave of the House

Another member had been recognized after -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I think the hon. member for Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) made a remark that the Chair cannot ignore. I would ask the hon. member if he would be kind enough to withdraw the remark.

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Speaker, I would be quite happy to if I said what the Speaker inferred what I said. I said it is scandalous on behalf of the hon. members opposite. It is as simple as that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I accept the hon. member's interpretation of that remark.

It is my understanding that after the last hon. member took his seat, the hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. R. Moores) rose to address the House. I enquired of him whether he was presenting a new petition. He indicated he was. After a wait to see if others wish to speak to the last petition, I recognized the hon. member.

MR. NEARY: By leave, Mr. Speaker?

MR. MURPHY: No, not at all. Carry on.

MR. NEARY: Oh, how cowardly!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: The minister responsible for the environment.

MR. SIMMONS: The only good reason for the budworm spray, look. The only good argument for it, the member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!
I understand leave has not been given so I would have to recognize the hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. NEARY: The minister responsible for garbage. They should be ashamed of themselves.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!
The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. R. MOORES: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise to present a petition on behalf of 125 parents in the Salmon Cove area of my district, relating, Mr. Speaker, and I will read the prayer of the petition. It is addressed to the hon. House of Assembly in session.

"We, the undersigned parents, express our concern and our dismay as taxpayers, that government's policy with respect to education in this Province should result in denying the children of our school the services of a guidance counsellor in addition to sacrificing diversity and quality of the educational programme, and petition the government therefore to change its present policy."

Mr. Speaker, about the most irrelevant thing pertaining to this petition is the number of people who have signed it. 125 does not necessarily reflect nor indicate the seriousness of this problem throughout the entire Province.

In the past couple of weeks various colleagues of mine, and on the other side of this House, have rose to support similar petitions relating to a drastic decrease in the quality of education in this Province.

Last week, for instance, one of my hon. colleagues talked about the loss of a physical recreation teacher in one of the schools in Lewisporte district. Now, Mr. Speaker, the tragedy has occurred, lightning has struck twice. These students in the school at Pearsalvic in Victoria will lose their guidance counsellor.

AN HON. MEMBER:

High school?

MR. R. MOORES:

Yes, it is a high school.

If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Speaker, when I was in teacher training we were always told that one of the most vital modifications and modernizations in the educational system in this Province was the advent of the introduction of guidance counsellors. And the reason for that was because most of our students were dropping out of our schools. And the reason for the increase and the consistency of the drop-out rate was because our students were not receiving the proper guidance and direction with regard to the programmes, the course instruction and what they should prepare themselves for in terms of finishing their secondary education.

So this Province, this Department of Education, embarked upon a very modern, and I must say, a very necessary, very logical programme of introducing into the system guidance counsellors.

Now the negative result of the present policy of this government with regard to teacher cutbacks has been that the school boards, wherever they might be, are getting rid of their specialist teachers. And God forbid, Mr. Speaker, perhaps in some cases these are the very teachers that should not be removed, particularly in this instance of a guidance counsellor, in a school, I might add, where the drop-out rate is reasonably high. And if there is an instance of any instances - we just talked about the spray programme in this Province and the very, very vital issue that it is - well, this policy of teacher cutbacks is equally vital; in fact, in my opinion, perhaps long-term, more vital to this Province.

The Minister of Education has on frequent occasions dodged this issue whenever he could.

MR. R. MOORES: We had a meeting in Carbonear about a month ago. Six hundred teachers and parents came out to a public meeting to hear the minister defend his department's and his government's policy and he did not even show up. But more importantly, not only did he not show his face, but he did not even have the common courtesy to send somebody in his absence. Six hundred people! That, in my opinion, is probably one of the largest public meetings held in Carbonear certainly within the last decade, and that indicates, Mr. Speaker, the very, very deep, serious concern that parents, not only in my district, not only in Carbonear, but all over the Province, the very serious concern indeed that they are showing with regard to this callous policy of teacher cutbacks. Why, at a time in our history when we need a greater quality of education in this Province, when we need more specialist teachers to help our children, to decrease the drop-out rate, to increase the quality, why at this time in our history, when finally we are going over the top, when finally we see the light at the end of the tunnel, when finally we can do something to enhance the abilities, to enhance the skills and the training of our students, why now has this government taken an about turn, an almost disgraceful, shameful about turn and have, in effect, Mr. Speaker, lambasted the very essence, the very philosophy of the basic goals and achievements of our education system, that of preparing a student fully for his life in this society, educating him, training him mentally and physically for the society that he will, in fact, Mr. Speaker, confront, fight with, struggle with to survive for the rest of his life? And this minister, the same minister, has stood up on many occasions in this House and has extolled his virtues as an educator in this Province,

MR. MOORES: has extolled the virtues of his government and what they have done since coming to office in 1972 to promote and encourage quality education. Now an about face, a shameful about face tearing down the very essence of our educational structure, leaving the students who are most vulnerable, the real students in this Province, students who need education more than those in the urban centers, the more vulnerable students in this Province are now being subjected to a callous policy that will do no good for this Province, no good for the students and no good for the educational system.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: I support the petition so ably presented by my hon. colleague the member for Carbonear (Mr. Moores) on behalf of his constituents in the community of Salmon Cove, Sir, where the board has decided that they would do away with the guidance counsellor—probably one of the most important positions in the school, the guidance counsellor.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I hope we have better luck with getting the Minister of Education up on his feet today than we had with the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture and the Minister of Health. On one or two occasions previously the Minister of Education tried to defend this policy of cutbacks by trying to persuade the House that there would be no drastic affects on the quality of education in this Province. I do not know, Mr. Speaker, what yardstick the hon. gentleman is using to measure the quality of education in this Province. How can you, Mr. Speaker, cut back in the elementary and high schools in this Province, how can you eliminate a guidance counsellor in the school in Salmon Cove without drastically affecting the quality of education? Could Your Honour answer that for me? Could Your Honour tell me how you can cut the number of teachers in the schools and not affect the quality of education when our quality is already low, Sir? It has been proven, and the minister admitted in this House, in the last

MR. NEARY: two or three years since that hon. gentleman became Minister of Education that our quality is below the standard of education being taught on the mainland.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will be interested in hearing what the hon. gentleman has to say. I believe over the weekend there was an ad in the paper by the two-man task force over at Memorial that they are now going to hold public hearings. I believe, Sir, that every parent, that every organization, every member of this House should go down and appear before that task force and recommend that they recommend to the Minister of Education and to the government of this Province that a fullfledged, independent, fact finding enquiry be made into our whole educational system right from kindergarden right on up through university.

Mr. Speaker, we have a golden opportunity in this Province as I see it at the present time because what we need in this Province at the moment are more specialists and my hon. friends who are academics, who are former university students - I never saw the inside of an university myself but, Sir, I believe we need specialists and I believe the university should revamp its programme now to shutdown the school of education for, say, five years, shut it down and start training specialists, beef up your B.A. and start training specialists in math, specialists in English, specialists in language, specialists in history and so forth and so on all the way down the line and then give these people who get their B.A., give them one year teacher's training because that is all they need, Mr. Speaker, One year, that is all they need.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is what they are getting now.

MR. NEARY: Well, that is not what they are getting now. No, Sir, they are not, My hon. friend knows the difference. They are getting a general spattering of everything. I am talking about specializing. Shut down the school of education for a five year period have teacher training and then start training specialists at the university. But, Sir, that is again only something that I am saying off

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MR. NEARY: the top of my head, a statement I am making off the top of my head. Any member can get up and make a suggestion. But, Sir, it is not only a cutback

MR. NEARY:

in teachers that is affecting education in this Province. We have to take a look at the total education system to see if we are getting the best value for our educational dollar. We are spending one third of our budget on education. Are we headed in the right direction? Are our children my children, your children are our children being properly trained for the right things? Are we directing them in the right direction or are they not? We do not know, Sir. And as my hon. friend indicated, we cannot take any chances. The most valuable asset we have is our people and we do not know if we are doing right or wrong at this moment. And all we have is the minister sets up a two man task force over at Memorial that has a vested interest. They are not going to recommend anything that is going to affect their own little empire or the university. And that is why I suggest, Sir, that every man, woman, every taxpayer, every parent, every member of this House, Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, unions, should go down to that task force at their public hearings, and recommend to them that they recommend to the minister that a full-fledged, independent study be made of our whole educational system to see if we are getting the right value for our educational dollar and above all to see if we are headed in the right direction in our educational system in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Terra Nova, followed by the hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this petition so ably presented by my hon. friend on behalf of 125 people of Salmon Cove. And, Mr. Speaker, this petition comes from the kind of an area that is going to be drastically affected by teacher cutbacks. And the petition alludes to the fact that the teacher cutbacks are going to result in affecting the diversity of programmes.

MR. LUSE: Mr. Speaker, this is the issue that I have been alluding to every time I have spoken to these petitions the reduction in programmes, thus affecting the quality and equality of educational opportunity right throughout this Province, particularly rural Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, there has been some indication by hon. members opposite to dismiss the idea that quality of education and equality of educational opportunity are not related. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to again say that in my definition of education the two are interwoven inseparably, interlinked; you cannot have one without the other. You cannot have quality without equality of educational opportunity. To look at it otherwise is to look at it in a very narrow, parochial view. Quality has to do with excellence, it has to do with the superiority of a course or of a subject. And to indicate that quality and equality are not related is to defy and deny all the principles of learning that there were ever developed.

Quality takes into effect the teaching and the learning process. Some people would suggest that the learning process has only to do with teaching. And I would advance the argument to hon. members that the most important ingredient really is the learner. We can have an instructor who is A-1, and if the learner is not at all inclined to that particular course then that person is not going to receive a quality education. A person doing a particular course, a student, an adult, anybody else, they must have a certain aptitude towards that course. They must feel inclined to do that course, otherwise there will be no quality education resulting on the learner's part despite how effective the teaching process has been.

MR. LUSH: So therefore there has got to be a wide range of courses to meet the individual needs of students which brings us into equality of educational opportunity and when courses are reduced there is no equality of educational opportunity and does not give the person concerned the opportunity to get a quality education.

So, Mr. Speaker, in its broadest sense and in the -

MR. R. MOORES: Persalvic.

MR. LUSH: No, but in accordance with all the principles of education, that quality and equality are inseparably interwoven and interlinked, and interdependent upon each other.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have had tremendous discrepancies throughout this Province with respect to equality of educational opportunity. I have alluded to the fact that there are high schools offering upwards to fifteen courses and there are other areas in rural Newfoundland where they are just offering a barebones curriculum. How can there be quality and equality when you compare the two? And I would put forward to hon. members that there cannot be quality and equality under this situation that we now have. There cannot be quality without equality. The two must go hand in hand.

Mr. Speaker, throughout rural Newfoundland, and I expect in the area where my hon. member has presented the petition

MR. LUSH:

from, that I expect there are many inequalities within that same area - areas where people have access to trade schools to do pre-vocational courses, and yet in other areas where people can just do the barebones requirement. Can any hon. member say that there is equality and quality education in situations like that?

Mr. Speaker, this is what teacher cutbacks are doing to rural Newfoundland in particular, causing schools to reduce their programmes thus affecting the quality and the equality, thus affecting the educational rights of every citizen in this Province. A backward step, Mr. Speaker, never a more backward step ever taken by any government in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I support this petition wholeheartedly in the hope that the minister when he speaks to this petition will indicate to us that the government intends to throw away, to rescind this very backward step, this very backward course they have embarked upon.

MR. SPEAKER: (Dr. Collins) The hon. the member for Trinity Bay de Verde,

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I, without any qualification at all, get up and support the petition presented by my colleague, the member for Carbonear (Mr. R. Moores) on behalf of in excess of 100 people of the Salmon Cove area with respect to the laying off of the guidance councillor in that particular area.

Sir, in doing so, I appeal to the minister once again, as I did several days ago, to reconsider these teacher layoffs until such time as the Task Force report has been recommended or delivered to

MR. F. ROWE: government and certain recommendations made, and presumably the government will take certain actions on it. Sir, it is putting the cart before the horse, to say the least, when you lay off teachers and then you set up a Task Force in order to study the reasons for the layoff and if there are any ways to overcome it and whether it would have any effect on the quality of education.

Sir, if there is any area of education that is of vital importance to the student today, it is the guidance counsellor. It seems to me, Sir, that each time a petition is brought forth with respect to a teacher layoff, it seems to hit the specialist teacher. This seems to be the trend that is happening here. I was astounded last week, Sir, when the minister said something to the effect - and I am not quoting him accurately, but this is what, in fact, it meant - that the laying off of a phys.-ed. teacher would not affect the quality of education in that particular system, and he gave some reasons for it, but I was astounded and entirely disagreed with him. Now, Sir, we are in a situation where we are told a guidance counsellor is going to be laid off. Now, Sir, what is the situation in this Province today? We have maximum unemployment - never higher in our history! We have a number of Schools of Trade and Technology where students cannot find places, and if they do find places in some of these courses, they find themselves in the position that they cannot get a job after they graduate from some of these vocational schools. And the same thing holds true, of course, for the College of Trades and Technology. And, Sir, even at the university level we are churning out graduates who cannot find jobs. It is not just teachers, by the way, Sir. I have had a great number of teachers coming in with

MR. F. ROWE: two degrees asking me to look for a job for them, they could not find a job. This is the very point under discussion. But I have had hundreds of other students coming in with other degrees who cannot find jobs. So the point that I am making, Sir, is this, that if ever a student needed proper guidance, it is in our school system today, it is at this very point in time -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. F. ROWE: - probably the most important time in our history, where students who are coming out of high school cannot find employment; students are going into vocational schools and find themselves being placed in the wrong courses in terms of finding employment afterwards; we find students going to the university, graduating, finding themselves in debt and not

MR. F. ROWE:

being able to find jobs afterwards. The same thing is true for the College of Trades and Technology and I think to a lesser extent the Fisheries College. And by the way, Sir, talking about the Fisheries College, the Minister of Fisheries time and time again talks about the bright future of the fisheries in this Province and how more of our young Newfoundlanders have to get into the fisheries and make a contribution towards our society. Again this requires a revolutionary change in our instruction and in our curriculum.

MR. NEARY:

A guidance counsellor.

MR. F. ROWE:

And where else would a guidance counsellor be more effective, Sir, in getting off the ground certain extra-curricular activities and curricular activities respecting the fisheries. So, Sir, my sole point here is this - and by the way, Sir, I might add that for a year or two I have been forecasting the lay-off of these teachers and the Minister of Education has been denying that it would ever happen. This year we will see the crunch. The sole point I am making, Sir, here is this: is that this is probably the most crucial time in our history since Confederation with respect for the need for guidance counsellors in our schools and other special education teachers, and I would recommend and appeal and kneel down to the minister, I would even go further, Sir, I would kiss his feet -

MR. NEARY:

He is not going to run again.

MR. F. ROWE:

- if the hon. minister would reconsider the idea, hold off the lay off of these teachers until such time as the Task Force report has had time to submit its report.

MR. S. NEARY:

The minister is not going to run again.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the petition presented by my friend and colleague for Carbonear.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, we have here again today a petition this time signed by more than 100 people protesting against the cut backs in education as proposed by the present minister and of course the administration that he is a part of.

The petition I understand comes from Salmon Cove, Mr. Speaker, but perhaps it is worth noting that the school that these students attend, Persalvic - I do not know if the petition is from Salmon Cove or from Persalvic I am not quite sure -

MR. NEARY: It is from Salmon Cove.

MR. CALLAN: It is from Salmon Cove. Well, anyway, we know that the 'Per' stands for Perry's Cove, and we know that the 'sal' stands for Salmon Cove, and the 'vic' stands for Victoria. So this Persalvic High School caters to students from three communities: Perry's Cove, Salmon Cove, and Victoria.

We have here today a petition from one of these three communities, Salmon Cove. I daresay, Mr. Speaker, that obviously the feeling is no less different in the other two communities and, of course, for that matter no less different that in the hundreds of communities around this Province because we have had on previous days and in previous weeks many, many other petitions similar to the one presented here today. Last week we had one talking about the loss of a Phys-Ed instructor; today, the loss of a guidance counsellor.

When I spoke last week in support of the petition regarding the loss of a Phys-Ed instructor, Mr. Speaker, I pointed out that obviously that type of person is not as necessary as, for example, a mathematics teacher, an English language teacher, a history or a geography teacher. That sort of teacher teaches the academic subjects which we have had traditionally down through the years in our schools. It is only in recent times that we have had these extras. But of course, Mr. Speaker, to call them extras, I think,

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MR. CALLAN: is a mistake. Obviously, they were considered to be a vital and a necessary part of our school system, especially the sort

Mr. Callan:

of school systems that we have had in the last ten or fifteen years, the regional and central high schools such as the one that services this region Perry's Cove, Salmon Cove and Victoria.

Mr. Speaker, a guidance counsellor, I think, is no less a luxury in a high school than the regular classroom teacher, a person who teaches the academic subjects. Mr. Speaker, in supporting other petitions I have drawn notice to the fact that in our high schools, and in all of our schools in this Province we have two kinds of drop-outs: there is the out and out drop-out and then there is the psychic drop-out. There is the out and out drop-out who decides after several months and for several reasons perhaps, perhaps home conditions, lack of money in the home, and so on, causing that boy or girl to drop-out, take their books and go home, drop-out to go to work to help the family budget and so on, and, of course, they drop-out for other reasons. But, Mr. Speaker, there is the other sort of drop-out as well, the psychic drop-out, the person who has dropped out for all intents and purposes; he is there or she is there in body, but for all intents and purposes they have dropped out. They are occupying a seat, but they are not interested in what is being said at the front of the classroom, they are not interested in what is being written on the chalkboard, they have dropped out. They are no longer with it. And, Mr. Speaker, I know from experience in high schools in various parts of this Province that a guidance counsellor quite often is the person who gets that person, who calls that person aside, has a chat in the office and has a good talking to that person. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, a lecture, if you want to call it that, or perhaps a little bit of guidance, a little bit of counselling, that perhaps the student lacks at home for various reasons. And we hear much today of youngsters being neglected by their parents, the mother and the father are gone, and they are left all alone and this is why we have some of the drug problem we have and what have you.

Mr. Callan: Mr. Speaker, I sincerely believe that the loss of a guidance counsellor to any school system in this Province is a great loss indeed, perhaps greater, perhaps greater than the loss, say, of a history teacher, and I have nothing against history teachers, but quite often many of the things that that history teacher is talking about—Achilles' heel, and how Achilles got struck in the heel. I do not know if it makes very much difference for a person who is being prepared to go out into life whether or not they learn about Achilles and how he got struck in the heel or where they got struck somewhere else for that matter.

So, Mr. Speaker, I sincerely support the prayer of this petition. And if I were allowed to do it, Mr. Speaker, I would almost support both petitions, the previous one and this one, I am not allowed to do that, if I were I would say let us forget this \$3.5 million for the spraying programme; let us put it into education where it would get the most benefit.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words to affirm the fact that I too am cognizant of the need for guidance counsellors. I am not so sure that I can put a documentation on it and say it is the most important. I believe every petition we get about different categories of teachers, everybody says this is the most important thing, and perhaps we can come to the conclusion that everything is important in education. Perhaps that is the conclusion that we would have to come to.

I agree there is need for guidance. I attended a conference a few years ago and one of the things at that meeting—and I think the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) was there—where a fellow from Montreal, a fellow from greater Montreal where he talked about the teacher, the teacher being the best guidance counsellor, and, of course, that would presuppose that the teacher would have some facility in guidance. So I do certainly want to see schools have

Mr. House: a measure of guidance and a good measure of guidance to help the students in the problems that they have.

I want to point out to the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) that the way teachers are trained now is the fact that they are all specialists pretty well in an area. They all

MR. HOUSE: major in an arts and they take one year of teacher training, and that is something we have had going on for a number of years.

I think the task force will be addressing the problems of all specialties and I want to point out once again that we have not cut back in specialties. It is just on the regular teachers in some boards. That is all we have cut back on. And one of the reasons I supported this petition today, is the fact that there has been no cut back in the board referred to today. There has been no loss of teachers by that board and it just goes to show I guess that the board has decided that they will do something different with the teachers they have, rather than have them in guidance. I went and checked on that before I rose to speak. There is no loss to that board this year. So the board has decided apparently to use that particular unit in another situation.

Mr. Speaker, that is all I have to say on it and I am sure the task force will be addressing that problem.

NOTICES OF MOTION:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to move the House into a Committee of the Whole to consider certain resolutions in relation to the guaranteeing of certain loans under the Local Authority Guarantee Act.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act Respecting Elections, Controverted Elections and Elections Financing For Members Of The House Of Assembly."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN:

MR. NEARY: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Health, Sir, has had almost eighty questions put to him so far this

MR. NEARY: year and the hon. gentleman has answered about fifteen or seventeen, I think, out of the total number. Could the hon. gentleman indicate when we are going to have the answers to the written questions that were put on the Order Paper to the hon. gentleman back in March of this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. H. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, to that question, as I recall it, there are just about 100 questions in the name of the hon. member asked of me as Minister of Health. To my knowledge about half the questions, possibly more than half, have been answered. I stand to be corrected on that but certainly there is more than ten or fifteen. I answered ten or fifteen at one particular time. The questions which have not been answered, information is being put together and as soon as I get it from the officials I will certainly answer all the questions before the House closes.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: I will yield to my colleague, I will take my turn, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman has yielded. The hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier and I would appreciate just a short preamble, Sir, that as the Premier knows and the word around is that we are moving towards the closing down of this House, the government wants to get the House closed and get away from exposing the Province's business, and the preamble, Sir, is simply that if indeed this House does close within the next month or month and a half, the possibility is that when the next session opens the economy of the town of Buchans will have completely collapsed with the pending shutdown of the mines. And I want to ask the Premier, in view of this and he knows this to be a fact, just what steps the government have taken or is about to take that will help offset the social and economic effects

MR. FLIGHT: that the pending mine shutdown indicates that will take place in Buchans after the closing of the mines? What steps have the government taken to alleviate any adverse effects that will come with the shutting down of the Buchans mines?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, first of all regarding the closing down of the House, I would expect and I would be very surprised if it closes down before sometime in July and I think we will probably be open again in the Fall.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MOORES: I think we will be open for a good session in the Fall. And that is the way it should be. After all, if members are so enthusiastic as they seem to be, by taking two hours on I think two petitions again today -

MR. NEARY: Important petitions.

PREMIER MOORES: - when they could be discussed in the Budget Debate equally as well and wasting the House's time. But if they want to waste the House's time, Sir, that is fine with us. I mean it is unfortunate.

MR. NEARY: A point of order.

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

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman, Sir, again has questioned the motives of the Opposition, Sir. This goes on repeatedly. We hear this from the Premier, Sir, day in and day out and the hon. gentleman is allowed to get away with it. I think it is time to call it to a halt, Sir, and I refer Your Honour to Beauchesne, section 154 (3), "The imputation of bad motives, or motives different from those acknowledged, misrepresenting the language of another, or accusing him, in his turn, of misrepresentation, charging him with falsehood or deceit,

MR. NEARY: or contemptuous or insulting language of any kind, all these are unparliamentary. And the imputation of a false or unavowed motive, Sir, is unparliamentary. And I ask Your Honour, for the sake of trying to preserve the decorum and the dignity of the House, Sir, to ask the Premier to withdraw his remarks about the Opposition wasting the time of the House -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: - withdraw his remarks, Sir, and apologize, or Your Honour name the hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MOORES: Sir, before I am named I would like to speak to that point of order.

First of all, Sir, after hearing the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) talk so much about education today, I am glad to see him refer at last to a textbook as opposed to his own particular interpretation of the rules. However, Sir, when he said that there was a motive involved when I accused the Opposition, this, of course, is absolutely not correct. It is not a motive, Sir, it is just their behaviour which speaks for itself. The fact is, Sir, that they know as well as we know that they could indeed speak in the Budget debate, in the Throne Speech debate, with all the generalities that have to go with petitions, they have spoken on the same theme for petitions for quite some time. But having said that, Sir, I would suggest that it is not a point of order.

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

MR. SPEAKER: I already have one point of order.

MR. NOLAN: Speaking to that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: On the same one?

The hon. the member for

Conception Bay South.

MR. NOLAN: I rise merely, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that not only is it suggesting something less than honourable intentions on behalf of members of the Opposition, but the fact is that petitions form a very basic and important part of this House.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NOLAN: I mean, are we to say that the 332 people of Port Blandford are wasting the time of the House today? They did not write the hon. the member and say I want you to mention this business about the spraying for the spruce budworm in the Budget Speech or any other speech, they sent it in the form of a petition, did they not? Are we going to question their rights too? Because that is what we are doing, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HICKMAN: To that point of order. We seem to be straying somewhat from it, because I do point out that this is, I am told, the only Legislature in the free world where petitions are presented in the manner in which they are submitted to this Legislature. That is why there is a very strict rule applying to petitions, and that is why petitions cannot be debated. But any hon. gentleman who has been listening today, if he or she feels that this has not been a debate on petitions just does not understand what the word 'debate' means. And that is, Mr. Speaker, as Your Honour will realize, totally contrary to the rules.

With respect to the frivolous, vexatious point of order raised by the hon. gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary), at the very most, if it is a point of order, it would fall into the category of a minor difference of opinion, and very minor at that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I think I should point out that I have heard two hon. members on both sides on this point of order and I think I will call a halt there. I would point out as well that hon. members' Question Period is limited to thirty minutes, and I am usually aware of that and endeavour to protect that. I think I have heard as much argument as will help to elucidate the points in dispute.

The hon. the Premier's statement, number one, that these matters could be debated in a Budget debate obviously is not a statement which would bring order into operation. Exception was taken to his allegation that hon. members to my right were wasting the time of the House. I do not think that that would be an imputation of motive. Maybe his opinion is an opinion on which other people would differ and might differ very strongly, but I do not think it is an imputation of motive or of bad faith or of that serious a nature. It would, I think, be obviously a difference of opinion, but not a matter whereby hon. members' motives have been imputed.

PREMIER MOORES: If I may continue, Sir, and come to the question itself regarding what is planned to be done for the Buchans area, I think it would be very wrong for me to say that the solution is easy. It certainly is not; it is far from being an easy solution. It is unlike the St. Lawrence situation where St. Lawrence happens to be located in an excellent harbour where they have an alternate choice of real employment, resource employment through the fishery. In the case of Buchans, I would suggest that the question has to be directed to several ministers, and I am not trying to get off the hook here, because the thing is that, as I say.

Premier Moores: there is very little that we see can be done in a positive way. In the area of tourism we can do all that is possible by road connections into the Buchans area, by promoting the area as such, but then again with the exception of fishing and hunting I would suggest that the trip to Buchans just as a tourist attraction as opposed to the coastline and the other areas where with the same distance covered it would be so much easier to do for people coming into the Province, I do not suggest that that is going to be as meaningful as we would like it to be.

Secondly, the Minister of Mines and Energy could speak on what we are trying to do or what the companies are trying to do to discover more ore because after all, Sir, when the ore runs out in any mining town the result is pretty well the same in that it causes great dislocation and great discomfort, and it is something that we are totally aware of.

In the area of transportation and communication there are the two alternatives, of course; the top priority, and I think the most meaningful one for the Buchans area is the completion of the Burgeo Road and the Southwest Brook Road through Burgeo back to the Trans-Canada. It will give the passing traffic trade, for what that is worth, it will give the people access to the West Coast if the development is there, whether it be linerboard or what have you, and equally it will give access, of course, to the forestry and all that goes with that. But once again, I think, the hon. member would be the first to admit that people who are used to all of their lives to working in the mines are not going to adapt easily into becoming lumberjacks or foresters.

Rural Development can certainly play a role in a minor way whether it be handicrafts or small industry or this sort of thing to see what can be done. Industrial Development I would suggest is restricted to the mine itself or the by-products from that, whether it be the barite tailings or what have you. But all in all, Sir, we are conscious of situation and all these government departments are doing everything possible. As I say it is not an optimistic picture but we are doing all we can.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT: I would refer the Premier's attention to a letter that he wrote to the Buchans Lions Club on December 13, 1977, and I will just read the part that is germane to this particular question: "It was the concern for Buchans", the Premier, "It was the concern for Buchans that influenced the decision to advance the date of the development of the Hinds Lake project." Now that passage, Sir, is contained in a letter to the Buchans Lions Club who had written the Premier with their concerns about what would happen after the mines' shutdown in Buchans. And that line bears reading again, Sir, "It was the concern for Buchans that influenced the decision to advance the date of the development of the Hinds Lake project."

Now I want to ask the Premier, if the Premier would indicate to the House what affect the advancement of the development of the Hinds Lake project is having on Buchans to date or in what way does he see the Hinds Lake development affect the Buchans situation?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Well first of all, Mr. Speaker, the advanced date has not had much of an affect on anywhere as yet for the simple reason that the project, except for a few of the road projects around the Howley area, there is nothing else that has been done except for the ordering of machinery and so on. And when I say that the date was advanced bearing in mind the Buchans situation, certainly what I meant was that whilst it was maybe a year's difference between the project it would obviously - we would prefer to have the people for Buchans when they get off one job hopefully be able to move to another. But in my naivete, Sir, and I say that in all sincerity, I did not realize the difficulty between the two unions involved. And it is a very real difficulty here whether people like it or not. The Building Trade Union, who would be the people who would have the contract to build the site in the main, and the Steelworkers. I guess it is in Buchans, whilst they are in compatible terms I suggest that the President of the Labourers' Union, for instance, wants to get the people who are on his unemployed

PREMIER MOOPES: rolls employed before he takes on
the Steelworkers and their union.

Now this is not a problem that we
relish. It is not something that we like to see. But I can
understand both unions - well one union point of view of the method
in which unions operate. But I can also understand the very social,
the very real social need that there is from the people who are
eligible for employment in Buchans as well.

MR. NEARY: Let government or Newfoundland Hydro -

PREMIER MOORES: Pardon?

MR. NEARY: - carry out the project and then you
will not get involved in that.

PREMIER MOORES: Which union do you suggest we join?

MR. NEARY: Well.

PREMIER MOORES: But I mean, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member
for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is suggesting what the government start union
busting and union breaking and contract breaking with unions -

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

MR. SPEAKFR: A point of order.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman is misrepresenting
what I said, Sir, and not only that but is misleading the House again
in typical fashion that we have seen from the hon. gentleman, Sir, and
it is lowering the dignity and the decorum of the House -

AN HON. MEMBER: No, no!

MR. NEARY: - that I did not advocate union busting,
Sir. What I suggested to the hon. the Premier was that the government,

MR. NEARY:

Newfoundland Hydro carry out this project and then they would not get involved in the problem that the hon. gentleman was raising.

PREMIER MOORES: Are you saying we should not use unions.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that at all.

PREMIER MOORES: Well which one?

MR. NEARY: Where the government encounters the problem is when they contract, when they put the work out on contract; that is when they run into the problem with the unions.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The matter is not a point of order on which the Chair can make any decision.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, irrespective of which organization does it, whether it is private contractors or whether it is Newfoundland Hydro or whether it is the Department of Social Services I would strongly recommend that whichever group it is is going to have to have a union contract as long as we are going to recognize the unions in this Province. And when we have union contracts for construction projects such as this, whether it be private enterprise or whether it be government, naturally it has to be done with the union that is normally responsible for that. But, Sir, getting back to the situation of the advanced state of Hinds Lake, I have always said and I still mean that if it is humanly possible through union agreements and so on and access can be arranged for the people of Buchans to have a priority in that project it is this government's position that if that is humanly possible through the barriers we have to fight, if it is possible that will be the case.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I concur with the Premier when he indicates that any future that Buchans might have without a mine will be based on transportation through roads.

PREMIER MOORES: I did not say that at all.

MR. FLIGHT: Well, I said it and I am sorry.

MR. FLIGHT: It is a fact -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT: I do not want to get into an argument here, Sir, but I will just say in a preamble to the question that it is a fact that any future that Buchans will have without a mine will have to be based on transportation, Buchans will not have a future as a dead end as it is right now. The Premier just indicated that he agreed that the Burgeo-Buchans road -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. FLIGHT: That is what I am saying. So, Sir, I have two questions for the Premier; One, is his administration going to build the Buchans-Howley road? Is the present administration going to build the Buchans-Howley road? Also would the minister care to put a date on the completion of the Buchans-Burgeo road? Completion to a level where it will enable that road to have some economic benefit to the town of Buchans. Two questions, Sir!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I wish I knew the answer. As the hon. member knows that DREE road from Burgeo up to connect with Southwest Brook, I think there are about six or eight miles left on that end of it. And then you have the Red Indian Lake road to hook up from that and the length of time it is going to take to do that I do not know. I would hope that it would be about a two year project but that depends on the agreements we get and it depends on how fast the work can be done. But certainly it has a priority, there is no question about that, by both governments, I do not think there is any question about that.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary.

PREMIER MOORES: I would like to finish, Mr. Speaker, if I could? The Howley road, which is the one I think of the most immediate concern to the hon. member, the Howley road - first of all, the other road has the priority as a secondary Trans-Canada Highway because that is really what we are talking here. The Howley road will be hooked up through the

PREMIER MOORES: various dam sites and the roads that will be done for that purpose. But, Sir, to say that it will be an all-weather road, to say that it will be a road that can be depended on as a highway, I think at this point in time it would be wrong because, Sir, there is only so much we can do at a time and whilst there may be access there certainly will not be the all-weather road that we both would like to do.

MR. FLIGHT: One further supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, the original questioner.

MR. FLIGHT: Did I understand the Premier to indicate that the access roads to the construction sites will be built in such a way that would give the people of Buchans access to those construction sites regardless whether or not it will be all weather road or not?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, we are having some debate on our own side on this particular subject. Certainly as far as I am concerned I would like to see as the dams are going to be hooked up to Buchans, one dam is, as the other dams are going to be hooked up to the main dam and into Howley and for the roads in between whether it is a forest access road or whatever we want to call it I would like to see it hooked up, yes.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this government's answer to the shut-down of industry seems to be appointing committees. We saw a committee appointed in the case of Buchans, St. Lawrence, Come by Chance, Stephenville and Goose Bay. Would the hon. the Premier indicate if these committees have ever met that the hon. gentleman appointed? If they did meet, have they made formal reports to the government and if they have made reports will the reports be tabled in this hon. House?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, first of all Come by Chance was shut-down

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PREMIER MOORES: because it went bankrupt on the international financial market and nothing to do with this government whatsoever. That is number one. Secondly,

PREMIER MOORES:

the Labrador Linerboard mill hopefully will be started up shortly under proper management and under proper economic circumstances. The Goose Bay one he is talking about closing down, I am not sure what he is talking about, Sir, as such.

MR. NEARY: Logging operations.

PREMIER MOORES: Logging operations which is linerboard.

St. Lawrence shut down, Sir, because Alcan were allowed by the federal government, and I suppose, ourselves, to shut it down because they could operate more efficiently elsewhere.

MR. NEARY: Well, what about the committee?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER MOORES: The fact is, Sir, that Buchans shut down because it ran out of ore. Now maybe the hon. member if he gets elected can promise that there is going to be more ore found in the ground. Maybe he has that sort of a mine, but that, Sir, is absolute baloney.

MR. NEARY: What about the committee? What about the committee reports?

PREMIER MOORES: The fact is, Sir, that these industries shut down because of economic circumstance. In fact, Sir, there have been hundreds of industries, small industries started in this Province that have started on economic reality.

MR. NEARY: What about the people on this committee?

PREMIER MOORES: The (Inaudible) today, Sir, is starting because it is based on a solid economic base which will give continuing prosperity in this Province.

PREMIER MOORES: And when the hon. member, Sir, starts talking about what has been shut down in the industrial sense, it was his regime before that should have never started them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: A supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

Order, please! I would point out to hon. gentlemen on both sides that in Question Period hon. members should avoid debate.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I still did not get the answer to my question about the committees. I do not know whether the Premier in trying to make a little politics, Brownie points, just forgot the question that I put to the hon. gentleman, but the question had to do with setting up of committees to study these situations, the social and economic impact. And what I wanted to know was if these committees ever met, if they have ever made a formal report to the government, and if so, would these reports be tabled in the House? That was the question. I do not know if I am going to get the answer or not. And if the Premier will give me an answer, I have one other supplementary then, Sir, a short one.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know a list of the committees the hon. member is talking about -

MR. NEARY: Buchans, St. Lawrence, Come By Chance, Stephenville, Goose Bay and Linerboard.

PREMIER MOORES: Sir, the Linerboard Divestiture Committee, which has taken all these into consideration, will certainly be tabled in this House, and I would suggest

PREMIER MOORES: and hope that when it is tabled there will also be tabled the ongoing prosperity of that particular mill.

As far as Goose Bay, Sir, and that ties in with it, that is the wood study report which, I think, is more valuable to the committee that is trying to sell the mill than it is for somebody in this House to abuse the report for their own whatever reason.

As far as Come By Chance, Sir, those negotiations are going on with the British now. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is there today talking to them.

Equally, Sir, the St. Lawrence situation, there never was a government committee set up, as such.

MR. NEARY: Yes, there was.

PREMIER MOORES: But what has happened is that we have reached a situation where all levels of government and the citizens' committee themselves are working very satisfactorily towards a solution, And, Sir, the Buchans Task Force is, as I said, the problem, and the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) is welcome to come to any or all of these departments I mentioned and find out as much about it as we know ourselves.

MR. NEARY: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: In connection with the Buchans close down, Sir - and I think I have some experience in this - the most tragic consequences will be the devaluation in real estate, the lowering of the value of real estate in the community of Buchans. That will be the most tragic

MR. NEARY: consequences of the shut down. People will lose their life's investment. Would the Premier indicate to the House what steps his government will take to make sure that when the Buchans mine closes next year that the bottom will not fall out of the real estate market in the community of Buchans?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I know the experience the hon. member had when he was dealing with these sorts of things. I think he was in the N.D.P. in those days if I remember correctly. I am not sure of that, but I think that was the fact. Some very interesting quotes, Sir, at that time, as far as the hon. member is concerned, which I am sure he has passed on to the people who were concerned.

MR. NEARY: Yes, like no straight backs - work for a bottle of Coke, all this sort of thing.

PREMIER MOORES: Well, Sir, I suggest that is not a bad idea -

MR. NEARY: No, that is right.

PREMIER MOORES: Sir, regarding the selling of a house, which is a serious question in Buchans. First of all, it seems most ironic that when the company is passing over the homes to the people who lived in them, it is just at a time when they are going to find it very, very difficult to either sell them or pay for them or what have you. It is something that is of concern to us. We have been in touch with the Price Company as opposed to the Asarco people in this regard, because we have found that they probably would be a bit more reasonable, and whilst we are not in the position to make any announcement on it, it certainly is something that concerns us as well.

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

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MR. McNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. One of the responsibilities of the Divestiture Committee, as stated by the Premier, was to brief the joint councils and the other elected officials representing the Bay St. George region on the efforts to date being made by the Divestiture

Mr. McNeil:

Committee and the sales group, Woods Gordon, to dispose of the linerboard assets.

Since the last meeting of the Divestiture Committee was January 24, could the Premier tell the House when the Divestiture Committee will be holding its next meeting and when will the people of Bay St. George's be brought up to date on the efforts of the sales groups, Woods Gordon, to dispose of the assets?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I do not think that is a correct statement. I am not sure, but I would not, I would be amazed if it was.

MR. MCNEIL: (Inaudible) the other way.

PREMIER MOORES: The fact is, well the hon. the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) seems to be correct, says it is a correct statement as well. I know, Sir, negotiations with various companies are going on well. I do not think negotiating in public, although it may be appealing politically, I do not think, Sir, it makes very much sense economically, and we are trying to get this mill back on a realistic basis.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Terra Nova, followed by the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Labour and Manpower a couple of questions about the labour situation in the Province and specifically about the strike at Labrador City. It was rumored over the weekend that the workers at Labrador City were ready to come to an agreement, that there was some interference by workers from Northeastern Quebec, from Seven Islands and Shefferville. I wonder if the minister could comment on that situation and what the existing situation is now?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Precisely and briefly it is a very complicated and complex situation. Obviously you can draw certain conclusions from what has happened over the past few days. I am not prepared to draw

MR. ROUSSEAU:

these conclusions until my conciliation officers talk with both company and the unions which they are doing today and I anticipate that maybe later today or tomorrow I will have a report on the situation. I would not be prepared to say anything beyond that until I get that report.

MR. LUSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary. The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: I am just wondering if the minister can inform the House as to whether or not these negotiations going on between the company and the workers, whether there has got to be simultaneous agreement between both areas, that is in Labrador City and the workers in Seven Islands, or whether they can be negotiated separately?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I have a wire I received this morning from the international representative from Seven Islands who is the co-ordinator for the group and I have talked to people in Labrador City and like I say these are confusing and conflicting statements I am getting. So until I get a report I do not know. Obviously I guess all sides want to co-ordinate together and they do not want to break up in the negotiations between all steelworker locals. Whether the Newfoundland locals are prepared to go back without them or whether the other side is prepared to let them I do not know right now. I will know later on today or tomorrow. I will have a statement.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary and then the hon. gentleman for Fogo.

MR. NEARY: Could the minister indicate what is happening now in connection with the X-ray and lab technicians? Are any negotiations going on? Is the minister keeping in touch with the groups? The minister is looking for his colleague the Minister of Health. Can the minister answer the question?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. ROUSSEAU: There was a meeting held this morning, as I indicated in the House on Friday I believe it was, this morning at eleven o'clock.

MR. ROUSSEAU:

As I understand it in a verbal report but I do not have it from my conciliation officers, it is somebody else to my deputy minister, that there was some progress made this morning and there is no anticipation, at least a statement that was made over the weekend, there would be no strike until this morning's meeting. From initial results of the meeting I understand things went well. Whether other meetings are planned or not I do not know. They will be planned of course by the conciliation officer if necessary.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: I had indicated that I would hear only one additional supplementary and that I would hear the hon. gentleman for Fogo next.

CAPT. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Tourism. Reports coming in from the long weekend holidays indicates that again this year there have been quite a lot of disturbances carried on in the parks, excessive drinking to the extent where some people were even concerned about the safety for their children in one of the parks. Will the minister indicate to the House what policing is carried out in our provincial parks and does he think or feel that there is sufficient or enough policing carried out there, especially during the long weekend holidays?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any major outbreaks of violence in the parks over the weekend. I think there were a couple of incidents where some teenagers had a little too much to drink. I think that was the main reason for their disturbances. And of course we have some very competent park staff which we have had over the years working in these parks and when they find situations of that nature where there are people disturbing other people in the parks who are there to enjoy a pleasant, comfortable weekend and a quiet weekend in many cases, we call in the RCMP and we get excellent co-operation from the RCMP in assisting us and maintaining order. But I will be discussing if any further outbreaks of the nature that occurred in one park this weekend, if any further reoccurrences take place in the future I will

MR. J. MORGAN: sitting down with the staff of the Parks Division and trying to outline a policy of enforcement of some patrol system in the parks on a regular basis to make sure that order was kept in the parks.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member for Conception Bay South, followed by the hon. gentleman from Port au Port.

MR. J. NOLAN: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Justice. Traditionally and historically, a number of people in Conception Bay South have been selling lobster, salmon, fresh fish of all varieties, and vegetables near the Overpass until a week or so ago when the R.C.M.P. moved in on a Friday evening—I was there—and asked them to move off. Since then I have written the hon. member who graciously replied and he, in turn, has contacted the R.C.M.P. and I thank him for his correspondence. My concern is that the season is rapidly going by, I mean the lobster season for selling, and so on, the salmon is now coming up, and I am wondering when we can get some kind of a decision to put them back there if possible because they are suffering financially at the moment as a result of this action.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. A. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is correct, we have had correspondence. In fact, he telephoned me and we immediately asked for a report from the Commanding Officer of the R.C.M.P. which was a few days ago and then I got a reply which I guess the hon. gentleman has now received from the Commanding Officer saying he would have a report for us shortly. Now I cannot interpret what the word 'shortly' means but what I will undertake to do is that on tomorrow I will contact him, I will telephone the Commanding Officer and ask if we can have his report and recommendations forthwith, whereupon I shall communicate same to the hon. member for Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) forthwith.

MR. J. NOLAN: Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Detention Of Intoxicated Persons Act, 1973", carried. (Bill No. 44)

On motion, Bill No. 44 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Order No. 3, The motion is that I leave the Chair for the House to resolve itself into the Committee of Ways and Means for debate on the Budget.

Hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. R. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, it is difficult in the first instance to get all steamed up about this Budget, it being ten full weeks now, Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Finance brought down his first Budget. I would hope for the sake of his place in history it might also be his last budget. He cannot do any worse if he brings in a second budget, but we have a dreadful fear he might do as bad the second time around.

The House, Mr. Speaker, in ten full weeks has not been given an opportunity until this moment in time to debate the Budget, a budget that has very far-reaching ramification for the people of this Province. We have been obliged, Mr. Speaker, to use the Estimates, a procedure that would normally be one where we would get information under specific sub-Heads, we have been obliged to use that procedure in the past eight or ten weeks to debate the Budget. It will be argued of course that we could have organized our time differently and waited for the Budget debate. The fact was, Mr. Speaker, our House Leader, and we generally, could get no commitment whatsoever from the Government House Leader, or from the Government, or from the Premier as to when or if this Budget debate would be called. We know that technically it would be called at some point in time. Here we are now, Mr. Speaker, very unlike the Ottawa situation which prescribes how

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MR. R. SIMMONS: the budget debate will proceed, very unlike
the Westminster situation which also prescribes how the Budget debate
will proceed, very unlike these practices; here we are, ten weeks after
the event, getting our

MR. SIMMONS:

first opportunity in parliament to give the people of Newfoundland our views on the Budget speech measures. That alone is regrettable and that alone, Mr. Speaker, is a fairly clear commentary on who is at fault when it comes to the way this House is working or not working. We have heard the Premier as late, as recently as this afternoon lash out at the alleged waste of time in discussing matters raised in petitions. I would submit to him, Mr. Speaker, that an hour on an issue as serious as the spruce budworm is hardly a waste of time. I would submit to him, Mr. Speaker, that an hour on an issue as serious as the education cut backs are hardly a waste of time.

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible) when they take place.

MR. SIMMONS: I know, Mr. Speaker, that the government would like both these issues to go quietly away, but in a very real sense both these issues are of the government's creation. Both of them are issues brought on the government by itself by a lack of planning, by a lack of foresight, by a lack of checking into the issues beforehand because they are two very complex issues. I am surprised, Mr. Speaker, that we were able to deal with these matters in so short a time as an hour each, and we are only able to do it then, Mr. Speaker, because the muzzle is obviously on the government side of the House. I do not believe we had a government member speak to either of these petitions except the Minister of Education who for a very strange reason -

MR. NEARY: He is like a broken record down there.

MR. SIMMONS: - has manipulated himself into a position now where he has no choice but to speak to the petition because he is losing ground so fast, so quickly on this particular issue that he has to do something to save a little face. I say to him it is a bit late for that but I suppose better late than never.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Budget. The Budget itself ought to be a realistic statement of where we are.

MR. SIMMONS: It should be that, I do not think anybody disagrees on that, that it ought to be a realistic statement of our financial position. It ought not, Mr. Speaker, to be pipe dream, an irresponsible pipe dream. It ought to be an indication of what is to be done in financial terms, some kind of a clear indication of what government proposes to do in financial terms to strengthen the economy. It ought not, Mr. Speaker, to be an apology, an abject apology for what cannot be done. The Budget, Mr. Speaker, ought to be a financial plan for the future, for the next year at least, not a hodgepodge of figures and ideas which have no relevance to our situation as a Province. And yet, Mr. Speaker, despite all that despite the conventional knowledge about what a Budget should be the minister in bringing down his Budget managed to violate every basic principle about budgeting.

First it is a pipe dream. Dream is too kind a word - is there any such term as a pipe nightmare? If so, that is what it is. It is an apology, an abject apology. That too is too kind of a word. It is really an insult, an affront to anybody in this Province who has had any experience at all at budgeting, from the youngster on the lemonade stand at six or seven years of age, to the housewife with her household Budget, to the small business person, right through the whole gamut. It is an insult to anybody who has had anything to do with budgeting however primitive the kind of budgeting they were involved in. And as for a plan, Mr. Chairman, it is no plan. That is the most grave indictment against it. It fails to put forward.

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MR. SIMMONS: any plan whatsoever. Now, Mr. Speaker, lest I sound too negative, let me say some positive things about this Budget. It is a clever document, very clever document - certainly a nice document, a pretty document and a clever document - well worded, indeed slickly worded, Mr. Speaker, connivingly worded, skillfully worded. Slick, conniving, skillful, that is what it is, and I mean these as clear compliments, because these words at least admit to one thing, that the minister has succeeded in doing what he set out to do, to be slick, to be conniving and to be skillful in his presentation of this hodgepodge which he dares to call a Budget. It is a slick document, Mr. Speaker, and so it should be a slick document. It was written by some of the slickest public relations people in North America, and they were well paid to do it, Mr. Speaker, written by a bunch of professionals in Montreal. And there the minister made history. I suppose it is the first time in all our history that we had to go outside the Province to have our Budget written - the first time - written by a bunch of PR fellows in Montreal.

Written in Montreal, Mr. Speaker, yes, but dictated in New York. I know the minister's version of how it was done - a romantic, candy-coated version of how he slugged long and hard. One thing we know about this minister - he does not slug either long or hard.

MR. HICKMAN: Come in some morning at seven o'clock,

MR. SIMMONS: I may do that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RIDEOUT: He will not see the minister either unless he jogs in.

MR. SIMMONS: A slick, conniving document written in Montreal; paraphrased, I will admit, paraphrased

MR. SIMMONS: somewhat in the minister's office to give it some local colour, dictated in New York by the money boys, by the same crowd who dictated that we should shut down the Linerboard mill in Stephenville against all rationale, against all wisdom on the subject.

MR. SPEAKER: (Dr. Collins) Order, please! I believe the hon. member is having difficulty making his remarks known to the House.

MR. MURPHY: Oh, yes.

MR. SIMMONS: No, he might have asked for it, 'Graham', but anything we could give him would be too good. But the Minister of Forestry has the answer for the member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy). The only good argument I have heard for the spruce budworm spray is the minister from St. John's Centre.

MR. MURPHY: Is that what education does for you?

MR. SIMMONS: How would the minister know what education does for anybody?

MR. MURPHY: I have watched it.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to spoil the brief sojourn of the minister, who is here briefly from Florida to pay us a brief visit. I do not want to spoil his holiday here, his paid holiday at the expense of the taxpayers. I want to talk about the Budget and the minister has nothing whatsoever to do with the Budget except for the few thousand dollars we are obliged to lash out for his salary that he does not earn. Outside of that he has no connection with the Budget whatsoever. He is as irrelevant, as unrelated to the Budget as anything could be. And believe me, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of irrelevant, unrelated ends in this particular Budget.

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Tape 3406

EC - 3

MR. SIMMONS:

I was saying, Mr. Speaker,
before the member for Florida interrupted me, the document
was written in Montreal, dictated in New York and then

MR. SIMMONS: foisted on the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. It, Mr. Speaker, at best is a misleading bit of empty rhetoric, misleading and empty. One of my own constituents in talking to me on the phone the day after the budget came down perhaps put it best when he, referring to the press reports he heard about the budget, said to me on the phone, "Boy, that is so close to nothing as you can get." That is so close to nothing as you can get. Mr. Speaker, here we are in 1978 with a public debt of \$2.5 billion. That alone, Mr. Speaker, that alone ought to be a subject for a fairly lengthy debate in this House. I happen to believe that it is the nature of government and the nature of the government assignment that we will always have to borrow. That, Mr. Speaker, should never be interpreted as a license to borrow irresponsibly or without any reference to our ability to repay, to meet our ongoing, our accumulated debt commitments. In 1978 we have roughly \$2.5 billion in debt. 1972 when this government took office we had about a thousand million, about a billion dollars, about actually \$900 million in debt. And then, Mr. Speaker, this government took office, individual members of that government, including in particular the Premier-

MR. HICKMAN: \$900 million (Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: About \$900 million in 1972 and about \$2.5 billion, \$2.4 or \$2.7 depending on what figures you include, in 1978. I said in rough terms \$2.5 billion, in rough terms. Now, Mr. Speaker, individual members of that administration which took office on the 18th of January, 1972 had vocalized long and hard during the period before that, in 1970-1971, about the size of our public debt and how we were near bankruptcy and how the very size of that debt was such, was so large that they wondered whether we would ever be able to recover from the blow. The present Premier and the former member for St. John's West, the present member for the Federal seat in St. John's West, these two in particular, and other members of the administration, waxed long and hard about the shocking size and they were talking then, Mr. Speaker, in absolutes, they were talking about the overall, the absolute size of the debt at that particular time. Now I would be the first to concede that perhaps

MR. SIMMONS: certain things have changed, our population have gone up a few thousand so that on a per capita basis \$900 million per capita does not mean quite as much as it did in 1971 or 1972, but I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, the overall formula has changed that much so that while it could not support \$900 million in 1971 or 1972 it can certainly support \$2.5 billion or \$2,500 million or \$2,700 million. I do not believe it has changed that radically. So what has changed, Mr. Speaker? Well, to be kind you would have to assume that one thing that has changed is the perspective of the people who decried the large public debt of 1971 or 1972. And if their perspective has changed because of increased knowledge or increased information, I ask them for Lord's sake let me in on the secret. What is it about the vantage point which now they have that makes this debt alright, yet \$900 million five or six or seven years ago was a shocking thing?

MR. SIMMONS:

What is the problem? Are they not telling us the whole story? What is the problem? Are they willing to admit that all their rantings and roaring of 1971 were wrong and ill-advised and without foundation? The budget certainly does not give us the answer. The budget, Mr. Speaker, promises to spend more on resource development. And if you took that statement in isolation you would have to say, well bully for the government, they are going to spend more on resource development. But as we found, Mr. Speaker, over and over and over again you should take everything this government says with a large grain of salt and you should analyze what they tell you because what they say and what they do may be two very different things, as is the case right here. While they talk about massive new additional expenditures on resource development, an analysis of the figures will show you that over the next five years if the projections in that pipe dream of pipe dreams, the blueprint, are to be accepted there will actually be a 3 per cent increase in expenditures on resource development, 3 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Over the next five years?

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, over the next five years. That, Mr. Speaker, will not even keep pace with normal inflationary trends. The budget, Mr. Speaker, at the very least should tell the truth even if it is stark and not very palatable. It should tell the truth. It should not be loaded with half lies, half truths. It should tell the truth. This aspect of the budget which holds out the promise of massive new expenditures on resource development is at best, to put it most kindly, a half truth.

We are told, Mr. Speaker, that the fishery budget is up by 10 per cent. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is and it is not, if you see what I mean. It is and it is not. It is up by 10 per cent and yet it is not. Now, let me give you an example, Mr. Speaker, if I can do some fast arithmetic. If your stipend or your honorarium for a little job is \$100, and we will keep the figure simple, this year and then you get \$110 for the same job next year, well it can be

MR. SIMMONS:

argued that that is a 10 per cent increase. But, Mr. Speaker, for your stipend of the job last year was \$105, but then they decided to pay you only \$100 and then this year they promise you \$110, that is hardly a 10 per cent increase. In rough terms it is about a 5 per cent increase. And that is the slick trick, Mr. Speaker, they pulled on the fisheries budget this year. They had a projected figure as to what they would spend last year. They did not spend that much last year and so when they came up with the new figure for this year they based it on the actual increase over what was spent last year not what had been projected to be spent.

My point is this, that every year you can pull that kind of a slick trick simply by overbudgeting your expenditure but not spending it all. Indeed, how are we to know that the budgeted figure this year is not the figure they intend to spend at all but is just an inflated figure which in time will be cut back to a net figure so they can have a nice fat projected percentage increase from this year to the following year?

MR. SIMMONS:

You see, Mr. Speaker, what I am really saying on this subject is that when you have no more cards left, as it were, other than to play checkers with dollars, have a little silly game of arithmetic with the percentages, when that is all you have left to justify an additional thrust in Fisheries or some other department, I would say you are running out of steam pretty fast.

So, Mr. Speaker, let us dismiss quickly two myths about this budget: One, that there is any great massive expenditure in resource development generally, that is a myth, a half truth, even worse than that; and specifically, Mr. Speaker, about the fisheries portion of the resource development budget, that area where we should be having the most massive infusion of funds and effort, the fisheries, they are playing games with us. They have got a five per cent increase in there. They will not even keep up with inflation. And they were told in press release ad nauseam from the Minister of Fisheries, what great things are happening in the fishery. There are great things happening in the fishery, Mr. Speaker. There are great things happening in the fishery, but I say, Mr. Speaker, they are happening despite the Minister of Fisheries, not because of the Minister of Fisheries.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the budget does have a number of decisive moves in it, a number of decisive steps in this budget. There is a sales tax increase, up to eleven per cent. That is a decisive move, not a very popular one, a very counter-productive decision but a decision, and Mr. Speaker, these days when you are dealing with a government that makes so few decisions about anything, you should even look at the merits of the bad decisions they make. You might learn something from them. Even their bad decisions should stand back and study it for any merit that may be in it and the merit in this one is that they finally demonstrated they could make a decision, albeit a very counter-productive, a very

MR. SIMMONS: bad, a very ill advised decision, a decision which will hurt the ordinary people of this Province very seriously.

Now the only saving grace, and the government can take no credit for this, the only saving grace in the short term is the federal government's proposal which bailed them out for a six month period. And so for six months we are paying eight per cent instead of eleven.

That is one decision the budget took, Mr. Speaker, the decision to jack up the sales tax to eleven per cent. That is not the only decision, Mr. Speaker, What about the hospital ward fee? There is another decision, a great decision that just about every person in Newfoundland and Labrador will know about. Or what about the fee on children's dental care, Mr. Speaker. How is that for decision making? I am waiting to hear from good friend from Mount Scio (Dr. R. Winsor).

MR. NEARY: The representative of the dental society.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, and I hope he represents the dentists on this one. I am talking about the fee on dental care, one of the decisions in the budget.

MR. NEARY: Anti denturist.

MR. SIMMONS: I want to hear where he stands. I hope he does represent the dentists on this one because the dentists, other than himself, the dentists have spoken on this one. A man Trend in Grand Falls has spoken on it. He spoke rather dramatically about it. He said this, and I want to know what my friend from Mount Scio thinks about this statement. In time he will participate in the Budget Debate I am sure. One of his colleagues in the dentist organization has said, "With one stroke the Minister of Finance has made it one of the worst dental programmes in the country and has put the dental clock in Newfoundland back by twenty-five years."

MR. SIMMONS: How does the member for Mount Scio feel about that one? If he wants to come to the defence of the dentists, here is a good opportunity and a very sound issue. And then this dentist goes on, Mr. Speaker, this dentist in Grand Falls in a letter which he wrote a month or so ago, he goes on to say, "If the government had had to decide how to do the most damage to our children's dental health they could not have come up with a more effective idea." Mr. Speaker, it brings me to a thought that I was having today when I saw the stubborn refusal on the part of the Minister of Forestry to even hear argument; not only was he not going to change his mind but he would not even hear the arguments on this forestry spray programme. And here we are on the dental care programme, Mr. Speaker, with a man from Grand Falls saying if the government looked around for ways to most seriously damage our children's dental health they could not have come up with a more effective idea and that is using effective in its most negative connotations.

I say to the Minister of Forestry that his spray will be effective in the narrow terms that he has defined effectiveness. And I say to the Minister of Finance that his dental care fee will be effective in the narrow terms that he has defined effectiveness. Now, Mr. Speaker, these are both cases and they are both much more related than you think on first glance. These are both cases, Mr. Speaker, where the objective in the case of the dental care, to save a few bucks, and in the case of forestry spray to combat the spruce budworm problem, these are both cases where the immediate objective is almost incidental to the overall consequence of what you are doing. In the case of dental care by saving a few measly bucks, they are setting the dental clock back, you are affecting the dental health of a lot of youngsters. I know as a teacher and administrator in education how you used to have to drag the youngsters out. You had to cajole the parents, I am talking about a certain group of parents who were not perhaps accustomed in their young days to going to a dentist and going to a dentist was a fairly frightful thought and the youngsters had picked up all the

MR. SIMMONS: negative ideas about confronting the dentist as opposed to the benefits and so persuading the parents, persuading some of the mothers let alone the youngster involved was quite an ordeal, just getting the mother to admit that the youngster should be put through this ordeal in her mind, ordeal in her thinking about it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, not only as an administrator in education would you have to sell the mother on the advantage of it but you also have to convince her that it is worth some dollars as well, and I would say that is an almost unsellable argument, Mr. Speaker, dealing with that group of parents I have just alluded to. It is going to mean that while you save a few bucks so you can shovel off some more to Montreal or wherever it is going, while you save a few bucks you are doing a lot of damage, a lot of health damage and a lot of psychological damage to the dental health programme. And perhaps the dentist in Grand Falls phrased it well when he said that we have set the dental clock back twenty-five years. And I want, Mr. Speaker, I would hope, Mr. Speaker - I cannot tell members how to speak on this - but I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that when members talk about this they will talk about it not only in strict fiscal, financial money saving terms, I hope they will talk in the context of the letter that I have quoted from from this J.P. Trend, BDS, of Grand Falls because I believe he hit the issue there much more concisely and much more on center than does the budget in talking about the few dollars that will be saved.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this dental care fee

MR. SIMMONS:

on children's dental care cannot be defended. It is an irresponsible move and I would like to see the figures on it. I would like to see the dollars the government hopes to save on this one. What is it? Two dollars.

three dollars?

MR. NEARY:

Two dollars.

MR. SIMMONS:

Two dollars per youngster.

MR. NEARY:

Per service.

MR. SIMMONS:

Per service? So if the youngster gets a dozen fillings that is twenty-four bucks, right?

MR. NEARY:

That is right. They never told us that.

MR. HOUSE:

Up to thirteen years of age.

MR. SIMMONS:

Up to thirteen years of age, yes.

Well, I say to the Minister of Education that by stretching the age limit -

MR. HOUSE:

Now up to thirteen years.

MR. SIMMONS:

The Minister of Education is now learning about the Premier what we already know, that the Premier does not go by details in a Budget. It is thirteen in the Budget, you can tell the Premier. He has probably changed it to fifteen.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS:

Thirteen. Government by whim.

I say to the Minister of Education that the effect of stretching the upper limit from eleven to thirteen only has the effect of embracing more people in the 'not qualified' category, because without the bucks they are not qualified. Before the age limit was increased upward they had to pay the shot anyway, but now it only emphasizes the inhumanity of the situation by putting more youngsters in that category who will not qualify unless they slap out their two bucks

MR. SIMMONS: and another two bucks. And, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member for Mount Scio (Dr. R. Winsor) will tell us when he gets up what we are dealing with in terms of dental visits by the average youngster. I am sure it is more than one. You know, if the youngster comes, he probably comes more than once, and I would think this \$2 fee, in effect, means \$40 - \$50 or so for the youngster who has some problems with his teeth and has to go back again and again and again for a number of fillings and so on. So you are talking not two bucks, you are talking thirty to fifty bucks and that can be the difference between having the work done and not having it done. Now we are talking - and again, I am not the dentist, and I hope the member for Mount Scio will give us some of his expertise on this subject - but we are not talking about the youngster who has some minor problem which can be attended to in a visit or two - that is only going to cost him two bucks and four bucks, and that is not the issue - but I am talking about the other youngster who has serious problems. A dentist really gets to him too late, through no fault of the dentist, but perhaps because of where the youngster was living or lack of a dentist in the area and that kind of thing; the dentist gets to him too late in the first place and he has to do a salvage operation on the fellow's mouth, and the guy has to go back again and again and again so the dentist can make the best of a bad job. And so \$30 or \$40 or \$50 later the dentist has probably solved the problem so far as he is able given the condition of the denture when the youngster first came. But, Mr. Speaker, when the mother has, up front, to make the decision about whether the youngster will go, one of her questions now with the \$2 fee each time is how many visits. In other words, how many times two dollars is this going to cost me? That is going to be the question.

MR. SIMMONS:

And that is what is going to make the decision for the mother right up front before the youngster gets the first bit of remedial attention - How many visits? And the doctor, if he is smart at all, or if he is responsible at all, will say, 'Well, I really do not know, but it could take ten or twelve or fifteen.' And the mother says, 'Fifteen times two - thirty bucks.' And the mother may well be one of the many thousands out there who cannot afford the thirty bucks or the fifty as the case may be.

I was talking about the decisions in this Budget. I mentioned the sales tax to 11 per cent. That is a decision that everybody knows about around this Province. The hospital ward fee, the fee on children's dental care - that is a decision for you. You cannot say this Budget did not make any decisions. The decision to provide less student aid at the university, that is a decision we have heard a fair amount about and with good reason, because at a time when jobs are scarcer than ever before the opportunity, the chance of the fellow or the girl at university getting a job for the summer

MR. R. SIMMONS: to help cover the cost of his university attendance, at a time like that when the chance of employment is slimmer than ever the Government is socking it to these people, making it even more difficult for them to attend.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that if you are faced with a high unemployment situation, one of the sensible moves from an economic standpoint would be to consider ways and measures to delay the entry into the labour market of additional people. And what better way, Mr. Speaker, to delay their entry into the labour market than to keep them in school, to keep them at university, to keep them at a post secondary institution. But here, Mr. Speaker, we see the reverse psychology in play. Kick them out as fast as you can, force them out on the street because they do not have the money to go. What kind of warped thinking is that, Mr. Speaker? Is the same kind of warped thinking that we see in the dental fee decision? Is it the same kind of warped thinking that we see in the spray decision? Warped thinking, Mr. Speaker, and it makes one wonder if you are not dealing with some grim minds who get their satisfaction from inflicting discomfort upon people.

So there will be less student aid, Mr. Speaker, and there will be less for school bus transportation. If you ever heard convoluted reasoning, Mr. Speaker, - if you ever want to be exposed to some real new math, get the Minister of Education to explain to you how five per cent equals ten per cent. You can explain this how you want; the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that last year the Government paid ninety-five per cent of the expenditure, the boards paid five. This year the Government will pay ninety and the boards will pay ten. In my limited knowledge of math, one is twice the other. Last year if it was five per cent and this year it is ten per cent, if last year that five per cent was \$10,000, this year the ten per cent will be \$20,000, if the overall cost of the bus transportation does not go down and I doubt that is going to happen. The cost will at least remain static or rise. And to hear them talk,

MR. R. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, there is no change. No change.

I said before, the least their Budget could do is tell the truth. And on the subject of bus transportation this Budget and the exponents of this Budget, the people who have been trying to explain it away have not really been telling the truth on the subject. Mr. Speaker, if you think that reasoning, the reasoning used on bus transportation is convoluted, you should hear the reasoning on the teacher cutback. I never thought, Mr. Speaker, I would see the day when the English language would be used to convey such irrational ideas. I never thought I would sit in a meeting of six, or seven, or eight hundred people down at Holy Heart, a meeting that the member for St. John's South (Dr. Collins) says is a small meeting, I thought it was a very large meeting. It is much easier to get a crowd in a small community to go out to a meeting than it is in a large community because you will very often find in a community the size of Ramea, for example, in my district, or McCallum in my district, providing you pick the right night, a night when there are no card games, or ladies' aid, or home league, or bingo, or darts, pick the night when there is nothing else on and just about everybody in the community will come out to the meeting. My friend from Ferryland (Mr. Power) knows that it is much easier to get a meeting in Trepassey and Bay Bulls than it is in a larger community. I was amazed when I walked into that meeting at Holy Heart to find

MR. SIMMONS:

600 or 700 or 800 people there. So many things going on the city, so many people who live so far removed from the school and yet here they were in their numbers. And if the organizers of that meeting committed one mistake, then if they did it was one only because it was an excellent meeting, if they committed one mistake it was their failure to follow the dictum so well known in politics, if you expect a meeting of 600 people, hire a hall that holds 500. That was their one mistake. Because if that meeting with 600 people had been crammed into a 500 capacity auditorium everybody would be saying, what a crowd of people. But because there were empty seats there some people got psyched out and they began to rationalize that only a handful had turned up. The handful I saw was a fairly large fistful, 600 or 700 people.

So let us hear no more of this nonsense about how the meeting was not very well attended and how big a disappointment it was. It might have been a disappointment to some people. To me it was very, very encouraging because before then the propaganda that I had heard from the government side of the House was that the only people who were kicking up a fuss about this were the teachers. I heard it was the teachers thing all the way and nobody else cared. Then I sat there that night and I heard parents, concerned parents. I talked to them before and after the meeting, hundreds of concerned parents.

MR. MORGAN: Who spoke at the meeting though? The teachers or the parents.

MR. SIMMONS: The member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) asks me who spoke at the meeting. Well the Minister of Education spoke at the meeting.

MR. MORGAN: No, but who spoke from the floor?

MR. SIMMONS: Well, there were both types. I understood that - pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: Mostly teachers.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, I understood - the chairman asked, by the way, that only the parents speak - or he did not say that, but that they speak

MR. SIMMONS:

as parents. Now I understood that most of the people who spoke were parents. I know of one exception who was fairly clearly not a parent and that was Sister Patricia Donnelly. Alright? Now I would vouch for the fact that she is not a parent. But with that exception—and I think there was another sister who spoke as well, but with these exceptions I understood that most of the people who got up told frankly who they were and sometimes said I am a teacher at so and so and I gathered too that they had children in school as well. But to my friend from Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan), I also tell him that in addition to the minister and the teachers and the parents who spoke there was another person who spoke and that was the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Now I suppose he spoke as a parent. Certainly after the talk we have heard in the last few minutes about the fact that the people talking were teachers, certainly the Minister of Municipal Affairs would not get up and misuse the position and talk as anything but a parent. So he must have been talking as a parent. So I will tell you what he said.

Mr. Speaker, talking as a parent now, he, the man who happens to be Minister of Municipal Affairs but who was clearly talking as a parent that night at Holy Heart, he talked about the money he needed, he, the parent now mind you, the money he needed to provide water and sewer systems around the Province. How is that for a concerned parent? Well, of course, he more than anybody else, Mr. Speaker, abused the rule from the chair that people there talking should talk as parents. The Minister of Municipal Affairs abused that particular rule. I wish he were in the House when I was saying this but I will repeat it again when he comes back in. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I will get back to it. He was abusing the rule clearly and, as we all know who were there, the bit of cheap, naïve politics that he engaged in had its answer from the floor. Indeed he was almost booed away from the mike. The audience told him in no uncertain terms what they thought of his taking advantage of a night when people were there as concerned parents.

MR. SIMMONS:

My friend from Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) and I were at the meeting as were several members from the government side of the House, several other members of the House, I should say, and he can vouch for what I am saying on this particular subject.

Mr. Speaker, I was talking about the teacher cutbacks. Now I suppose if I took the Premier's advise on this I would not talk about it at all because he is of the view that any time spent on talking about education is a waste of time. That perhaps, Mr. Speaker, he said it as late as today - tells us more than we knew about why the Minister of Education is having such difficulty getting his programmes through Cabinet.

MR. SIMMONS: but, Mr. Speaker,
for the record did you ever think, Sir, that you would
hear a Minister of Education ask a question like this: Do we
need remedial reading specialists? Do we need remedial reading
specialists? That is a man, Mr. Speaker, who spent years as
a school administrator; that is a man who spent his life in rural
Newfoundland, where I did; that is a man, Mr. Speaker, who as
a superintendent of education struggled with the frightful
reading levels of the youngsters.

MR. HOUSE: And a great record.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister has a great record
as a superintendent and it is a pity it is a pity, Mr. Speaker,
that he is so thwarting and warping the record now with a less
than distinguished record as the Minister of Education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Do we need reading specialists? Mr.
Speaker, can you imagine that coming from an educator,
a Minister of Education? And a statement like this -

MR. HOUSE: Reading specialists or remedial reading specialists?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: Remedial reading specialists were
the words. I wrote them down exactly as the minister said them.
I got my notes from that famous meeting there, the meeting
that the member for St. John's South (Dr. Collins) thought
was a flop. I do not know what that says for his colleague.
Perhaps his colleague, the Minister of Education, could not
draw a crowd, because he was the guest speaker. I would speak
to the member for St. John's South if I were the Minister of
Education.

MR. HOUSE: The crowd was quite big enough.

MR. SIMMONS: I thought the crowd was plenty. As
a matter of fact, the minister said at one point how is this for a

MR. SIMMONS: dilly? - the minister said at one point, 'I am reluctant to go to this kind of meeting! I can understand that night why he was reluctant to go, I could understand why he was reluctant to go. Perhaps that explains why he did not show up in Carbonear. He said at Holy Heart that he was reluctant to go to this kind of meeting. I would say that his reluctance grew after that meeting at Holy Heart, grew substantially by leaps and bounds, reluctance grew into absolute determination not to be caught in one of those meetings again.

And then he says also, Mr. Speaker, 42 students is not too large if they are bright - if they are bright. We should have a new book now, Mr. Speaker, a red book like they have in China -

MR. HOUSE: Read the research on large staffs. Read the lot - (inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I know that. Is the minister telling me that 42 students is okay, that we do not need reading specialists? The minister knows very well, Mr. Speaker, that he has himself in quite a situation here. He does not believe a word he is mouthing. The government have put him up front, put him out front to defend something that is indefensible, and I realize that. If I were in such a situation - what in an awkward situation, Mr. Speaker, what an awkward situation to believe in your gut one thing and to have to say the opposite thing. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have all played the devil's advocate role from time to time in a debate or in an academic situation so we could bring out both sides of the argument, but imagine, Mr. Speaker, imagine having the permanent appointment of being devil's advocate for the government for the people of Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: What an assignment! The permanent devil's advocate. I referred to him in other terms earlier today. I do not think he understood the context so I will say

MR. SIMMONS: them for him again. I referred to him as the kamikaze minister. I did not mean anything unkind, I just meant something fairly practical, fairly realistic. It describes extremely well by the way it is what people are calling him in education these days, the Kamikaze minister. And you know what a kamikaze is. ^{NOT} only does he destroy what he set out to destroy, but he destroys himself in the process. Not only will he annihilate quality education in this Province, he will annihilate himself too. The kamikaze minister. The hon. House knows what kamikaze means, and hon. House knows what kamikaze means as well. As a matter of fact he will think about that tonight and I hope he will do the brilliant thing, like one of these 42 bright students he keeps talking about, and resign before he commits kamikaze.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: Political hari-kari.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister chips away at his own record. He had a good record as a superintendent. I say it is less than distinguished as a minister, but now he has stooped to a new low; he is actually taking advise from the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan).

MR. FLIGHT: Just imagine!

MR. SIMMONS: No, this is great.

AN HON. MEMBER: Order, order!

MR. SIMMONS: I just wanted to make sure, Mr. Chairman, before I went on, that I had mentioned while my friend from Ferryland (Mr. C. Power) is in the Chamber, I just want to refer to, I believe one of his constituents who attended that particular meeting, a person who was at the meeting. The member was at the meeting?

MR. C. POWER: (Inaudible) about the House.

MR. SIMMONS: The man who spoke.

MR. C. POWER: (Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, a very articulate person and he followed, not directly, not immediately, but he subsequently followed the Minister of Municipal Affairs who had talked about water systems and so on. And one of the things he said, Mr. Speaker, will be with me for a long time, because he said, "I do not want my children bargained off against water works or fisheries." And that, if we are to believe the Minister of Municipal Affairs that night, was what was happening, that they were being bargained off against water works and fisheries.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have to come back. The Minister of Municipal Affairs may dismiss this thing, but we are trying to get a message through to him and we feel that with him we do not have to use any great, shouting rhetoric. He is a reasonable man, I have always known him as such, and we have a message for him. We can say it in normal language, without a lot of great repetition, and I am sure that he will get the message. Now if I were talking

MR. SIMMONS: to his colleague from Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) I would spell it, draw pictures to illustrate it, that kind of thing. Then I would get the member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) to explain it to him. Then he would be really confused.

But in the case of the Minister of Education, I am sure he does not need that kind of rhetoric or repetition. And so we say simply to him, the message is getting around, getting around very quickly, that he has not come through for the education community in this Province, for the people of this Province. That is the message that I pick up from talking to educators and people who know him well. They hold him in no disdain personally whatsoever -

MR. HOUSE: Nothing personal.

MR. SIMMONS: Nothing personal about it at all. And the minister would do them a great injustice, his friends in education, if he took it personally. But they are - disappointed is not the word. I do not want to get stronger words and use disgusted because it is not along the avenue of disgust or that kind of thing, Disgruntlement, perhaps; disgruntlement, disillusionment, perhaps these are the words, disgruntlement, disillusionment, It is not disgust because that connotes a certain confrontation, a certain anger and it is not that kind of anger. It is not the kind of emotion which says, "Let us get at him." That is not the emotion. It is concern and they are still giving him the benefit of the doubt. They are still saying, "Well, he was such a good educator perhaps we can get through to him." His time is running out. But he should do something, the minister should really do something to recoup his credibility, which is suffering. And the analysis, and I give to him now the gut analysis as the people of the Province

MR. SIMMONS: see it, and the people in education particularly: They feel that in Cabinet he has not had a fair say, Either the fellows in Cabinet are not hearing him or, what I hear, a note I wrote down but I did not use just now, but a note that somebody at that meeting said to me after the meeting, was weak-kneed, They used the term that the minister was weak-kneed and perhaps this is the problem.

The impression is around at least, the impression is around that the minister is not standing up in Cabinet where the decisions are made, not standing up for the things that he fought so hard for before he was in Cabinet. Now that is as kindly, Mr. Speaker, as I can give it to the minister. And he has two or three choices. He can get up and be himself on this, and being himself, Mr. Speaker,

MR. R. SIMMONS: means returning to first principles, it means fighting for the things that he believes very strongly in, or, Mr. Speaker, he can be the orchestrated puppet of those in Cabinet who advise him at all costs to get up there and toe the party line.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that party is full of people who have toed the party line to their regret. The member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) last week on the Dobbin issue, by toeing the party line destroyed, jettisoned the bit of credibility he had in this House and in the Province. People around the Avalon Mall that next day were saying, 'What happened to Marshall?

What happened to him? We were depending on him.' Well they have learned now they cannot depend on him.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that side of the House, as I said to the Minister of Education, is full of people who have toed the party line and sacrificed themselves and their credibility in the bargain.

I was talking, Mr. Speaker, about the decisions in the Budget. I mentioned the eleven per cent sales tax, the hospital ward fee, the dental care fee; I mentioned the cutback in student aid at the university, a post secondary institution; the cutback in school bus transportation subsidies; I have mentioned the teacher cutbacks that alone will have disastrous effects on education in this Province, disastrous. And then, Mr. Speaker, also in the same Budget, the decision that the Government will not pay for consumables, those workbooks and like items that the youngsters use so much of these days. Consumables, Mr. Speaker, in 1978 in the schools represent a fairly large percentage of the student textbook cost.

MR. T. LUSH: Call a quorum.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Call a quorum immediately.

MR. S. NEARY: A quorum call.

MR. R. SIMMONS: You are welcome to do it anytime you want to. Now, Mr. Speaker, I think we ought to have a quorum in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: A quorum call.

MR. SPEAKER: We have a quorum. The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. HICKMAN: The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir, would he yield with the unanimous consent of hon. members of the House? I move that Your Honour not leave the Chair at six o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, this is just an example of the excellent co-operation between the Government House Leader and myself when the Premier is not in the House to lower the decorum and the dignity of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. member for Burgeo,

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, -

MR. HICKMAN: At one minute to eight I will move that you sit down and I move the adjournment, okay?

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, I understand that this is going to close up at some point tonight, is it?

MR. HICKMAN: At one minute to eight.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, I see, yes. Well that might not be my concern. I just wanted to - It is my concern as a member of the House but -

MR. HICKMAN: I think the hon. gentleman should yield.

MR. SIMMONS: Whichever gentleman is speaking at the time, yes. Mr. Speaker, as soon as the Minister of Tourism gets sorted out over there, which should only take a few days, I will continue. I was talking, Mr. Speaker, about some of the decisions in the budget and the one I was coming to was the decision that the student consumables would not be paid for. Now this is a fairly sad decision because it is going to cost a lot of money. I was saying that in 1978 - I am in the happy position, Mr. Speaker, of having all the time I want. I do not intend to stay that long but if I have to compete against the member for Bonavista South in addressing his section of the party I shall take my time. I have lots of it.

MR. HICKMAN: Did the hon. gentleman say what that cost would be?

MR. SIMMONS: No, because I do not know.

MR. HICKMAN: I have it somewhere. It is in one of the files.

I will dig it out.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I only wish that the Minister of Fisheries, who has been fairly vocal during the past few minutes and is usually vocal - almost every day of the week we get a press release from him - I only wish he were as vocal last week at a conference in Halifax. Yes, the Minister of Fisheries. I was ashamed, Mr. Speaker, absolutely ashamed. Here I was at a conference, a fairly major conference in Halifax that went on for two days, a conference that had three major thrusts - fisheries, energy policy and transportation - a conference that had about three hundred people from all over North America and from Europe, some of the top people in their respective fields, almost like a who's who in energy and fisheries and finance, sponsored by the Financial Post, a two day conference that brought together about 300 people, the senior banking people from England, from Germany and from Canada and from the New York area of the United States; senior people in the fish industry business from Norway and from Germany and from England and from all over North America; senior people in energy from Houston, Texas and from Norway and from various parts of Canada, Calgary and points East; senior people from government at the Federal and Provincial levels; senior people in shipping from Norway, from various parts of Europe and North America; senior people in ship building from various parts of North America, a top-notch crew of people, Mr. Speaker, who had come to talk about some of the economic directions that we should be taking in Atlantic Canada.

I would say first of all to the Minister of Fisheries on a positive note that the least he can do is get, if it is possible, a transcript of the discussions there because as they relate to fishery I believe they are crucial, the kinds of things that went on there. But, Mr. Speaker, at the other level, I started to say I was absolutely ashamed, and I must admit that I was not the first to notice it. I must

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MR. SIMMONS: admit that I was standing in one of those little pre dinner warm ups on Thursday, the first day of the conference, when I overheard a couple of fellows from the press noting that there was nobody there from the Fisheries Department of Newfoundland. The press picked it up first on Thursday afternoon. Not a soul, not a living soul, Mr. Speaker, from the Fisheries Department in Newfoundland

MR. SIMMONS:

and we hear all this bellyaching about policy and we see that plethora, that diarrhea of press releases that load my desk every day of the week. Nothing wrong with that, Mr. Speaker, if it were somehow tangent to a connected policy. But when it comes time, Mr. Speaker, to put out press releases the minister is there, when it comes time to take apart Ottawa, the minister is there - perhaps these are important functions of his job - but when it comes time to get some input, to make some connections, nowhere to be seen. Not a soul, Mr. Speaker, from the Department of Fisheries or I may add, the Department of Transportation, and a lot of the conference had to do with transportation in the larger context and I wish the Minister of Transportation were here because I have some comments growing out of the conference which I would like to make but I will save them and make them in his presence.

But just the overall comment now, Mr. Speaker, here was a conference of real importance to the Atlantic Canada fishery and to transportation and not a soul there. I will say, and again I am happy that the Minister of Mines and Energy is here, I say this and I also said it publicly on the radio a couple of days ago, that I was very impressed with his people and the way that they put forward our energy position.

MR. NEARY: Too bad the minister does not do the same thing, follow their example.

MR. SIMMONS: One thing at a time now, 'Steve'. I just want to say, and I like to keep my praise separate from my criticism, the Department of Mines and Energy were very well represented there. Hydro was well represented there and they, these three men, two from the Energy Department and one from Hydro, put forward the Province's position on energy in admirable, very competent fashion. I was really impressed and the press picked it up. I noticed in the paper the next day in Halifax it got good coverage and it was a real credit. And it goes to demonstrate, Mr. Speaker, the very point of what I am saying, that the fisheries people and the transportation people

MR. SIMMONS:

should have been there in the same force. I am not suggesting the ministers have to go to all these conferences. They are busy people and they have other things to do. But we should have had somebody there holding up our end. And I raise it now, Mr. Speaker, not to criticize past weaknesses or what should have been done and was not done. That is not important unless we can draw a lesson from it. The lesson I would draw from it is that I would hope that in the future where those critical discussions are going on which affect us, whether we are there or not they affect us, I would hope that we would be more on our guard as a Province and see that we are there.

I get very uptight about the fisheries issue because I was at a conference in Sydney a year or so ago and again this one in Halifax last week and the same attitude, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact I made a note, and I intend to do it, there was a fellow there from Air Canada who just about drove me berserk just by some of the nonsense he was getting on with. I was one of the people and there are others in this room right now. The member for Mount Scio (Dr. Winsor) was one of them, as a matter of fact, and I and other members, the Minister of Justice and the member for Mount Pearl (Mr. N. Hindsor) I remember, we went to a reception at the Hotel when Mr. ~~Limber~~ the Atlantic Vice-President for Air Canada was inducted or was introduced - ~~Limber~~, is it? - something, whatever. You will see as I talk that his name is very unimportant. But at that time he was paraded as Air Canada's answer to Atlantic Canada and that he as the new Atlantic Vice President was going to do things - the Minister of Justice may be interested in this. I am talking about this new Atlantic Canada Vice President for Air Canada. We were at the Hotel when they had the little reception for him a year or so ago. We were told at that time in formal terms that, you know, with the appointment of a Vice President for Atlantic Canada that there was going to be a new emphasis on Atlantic Canada by Air Canada. Well you should see what the emphasis is. He was on a panel in Halifax.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: By his accent he probably is. That is right, yes. Kind of a balding man. You should have heard the nonsense that came out - well not nonsense, I should not say it that way. You should hear the bias that came out of that man. It was Atlantic Canada started with the bi-centennial highway on the one side and it ended down somewhere at the end of the Bedford Basin. Every time he spoke he said, especially

MR. SIMMONS:

Halifax, particularly Halifax, or of course, including Halifax. At one point he even said this, Mr. Speaker. He was talking - and I wish the Minister of Transportation were here, because it is a concept that we should latch on to - he was talking about the concept of integrating sea transport with air transport to speed up deliveries on the West Coast of North America. He was talking about bringing shipments from England, for example, or from Western Europe, by boat to the East Coast of North America and then to avoid the trip through the Panama Canal or to avoid long overland routes on train, take it by air and fly it. And he actually made this statement at one point: he said, 'Halifax is the nearest point in North America to Europe and is the obvious place to make the transfer.'

MR. PECKFORD:

That is one reason why we have a problem with industry bias and, if I just may add, it just so happens now that the industry people in this country are far more attuned to knowing where Newfoundland is than federal agencies and other agencies that are supposed to know better and promote it.

MR. SIMMONS:

I cannot disagree with the minister. As a matter of fact, I agree with him. And it is frightful! I am going to send the guy - I am telling you now - I am sending the guy a map to show him that Newfoundland is there because I am sure he does not know. -

MR. PECKFORD:

May I suggest to the hon. member that he allow me to send him one of my letters?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS:

Well, even in these matters, Mr. Speaker, we have to maintain a certain degree of decorum, you know.

MR. HICKMAN:

Mr. Speaker, may I?

MR. SIMMONS:

Okay, sure.

MR. HICKMAN:

About three or four years ago

I was asked to represent this government on a panel discussion that was given at Dalhousie. It was sponsored by APEC, I think, and it was on for three or four days, and there were representatives from the other Maritime governments. And there was a federal minister there - I will not name him - but he gave us a great lecture on the need for a large city in Atlantic Canada and had all the statistics to show the amount of industry that flows to Quebecers as a result of Montreal being in the Province of Quebec. You know, the market gardening, small industries, and that Atlantic Canada must have one. And he was, obviously from an audience that was predominantly Haligonian, he was getting a pretty enthusiastic response and he got carried away and he let the cat out of the bag. This is the whole thinking - and I am not talking about political thinking - the whole thinking of the planners in the nation's capital is that one of the things to solve the ills of Atlantic Canada is that Halifax should be the Montreal of Atlantic Canada. And it is difficult stuff to fight. If you have noticed what has been happening in departments of government over the years where suddenly you were looking for a fellow in Public Works; he is gone, he is transferred to Halifax. Who has replaced him? No replacement. One of the best examples was Mr. Gerry Knight, who had transferred out of here.

MR. NEARY:

Yes, but he is back here now.

MR. HICKMAN:

I know, but he took a demotion to come back because he is going to pension this year.

MR. SIMMONS:

I thank the minister because he reinforces the point that I was making and the concern I had at the conference. And again I say to the Minister of Fisheries, without being critical or negative about it, it reinforces the need to be there all the time. Now I had - I was going to say fun - but it was more than fun because it had a purpose. I got a great charge out of dealing with the fellows from Mines and Energy and Hydro. We sat down at a table and the format that was being used there was to have three or four speakers speak for ten minutes each and then have questions fed to them, written questions, so that they did not know where the questions were coming from. So we kept stacking the questions so that every time the guy opened his mouth he had to talk about Newfoundland. And we put Linnner, or whatever the guy's name is, and others into a fairly awkward - but I did not feel for them - a fairly awkward position because every second question they read was related to the Newfoundland situation. And we forced them to relate to Newfoundland and to realize it was there, and to make comments on it. But it was a kind of a rear guard action. And what we need at those conferences is to be full participants and help change the attitude.

And the minister is right on another issue too which the Minister of Mines mentioned just now. It is not only industry so much as it is the agencies that really have a large say in the decision making process. I was appalled at this Sydney conference, this fish conference in Sydney a couple of years ago, to hear the fellows from the regional fisheries office in Halifax talk about their over view of the development of the 200 mile limit. They talked again as though the

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MR. SIMMONS: Island of Newfoundland were physically not there. They talked about taking a boat and sailing in a straight line from Cape Breton up to the Hamilton Banks, and to listen to them -

AN HON. MEMBER: Right through Grand Falls and Buchans.

MR. R. SIMMONS: That is right, yes, with a flag stop in Badger as it were. But it is this kind of attitude, this thinking that really frightens you. I suppose it makes you understand what is otherwise fairly incomprehensible about Russian forms of education, and I use that extreme analogy to make my point. I could never understand about the controlled system of education and how you could take things which were blatant untruths and make them sound true until I saw the thinking of the people in Halifax, and they have psyched themselves up to think that there is no island there. I do not mean that literally but in terms of their effective decisions. They have set themselves up to think that it does not matter that there is an island out there called 'Newfoundland' with a 500-year tradition in the fishery, with expertise, with a large labour force of 20,000 or so involved in the fishery, with a Department of Fisheries, whatever it is doing, right or wrong, the fact is it is there and it is doing things. They have psyched themselves up to believe that none of that exists.

What is even more frustrating is that the Federal fish people who are being paid by my tax dollars refuse the reality too. They do not know we are there. And somehow we have to find a way around it. I say that is a matter more of attitude than anything else.

The Premier of Nova Scotia - by the way, while I am throwing out bouquets, I wish the Premier of Newfoundland were here right now because he gave a very good account of himself in his prepared speech at the conference in Halifax. There was a half-decent report on it in the paper today but it did not convey the emotion that he was able to convey to the audience -

AN HON. MEMBER: Were all the premiers there?

MR. R. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Campbell could not make it at the last minute but the other three were there: Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Regan, and our own Premier. And I must say, the speech that the Premier of

MR. P. SIMMONS: Newfoundland gave is the kind of thing that has to be said again and again outside this Province, and also, the speech that Mr. Regan gave, in particular, has to be said again and again to people from outside Atlantic Canada. What I was impressed with most about the conference was that we had so many people from outside Atlantic Canada in decision making positions: in industry, for example, some of the top people from Canaco, the gas people in Houston, Texas; the senior vice-presidents of the banks in Canada and in Europe, and so on. Some of these people were there and I took particular note of how they were receiving the addresses by the various premiers, and for most of them it was the first time, I would think, seeing those fellows or meeting them, and from that standpoint in particular it was a good exercise.

I started to refer to Premier Regan because he, at one point in his remarks, said something that needs to be reinforced, I think. I happen to believe it, and it crosses party lines in a very real sense. He said that the national political parties - and he said all three and was obviously referring to Liberal, Progressive Conservative and NDP - the national political parties do not have a sufficient commitment to regional development.

MR. PECKFORD: That is a Liberal Premier who said that.

MR. P. SIMMONS: That is a Liberal Premier who said that, Mr. Regan, the Premier of Nova Scotia, and I think he put partisan politics aside and he was being very frank and very honest about the issue. Sometimes in the interest of waving the party flag, all of us, on both sides of the House, get sucked into saying, 'My party, right or wrong', but on Federal issues we more and more have to realize that in many respects it is 'we against them', that there is a centralist philosophy operating in all three of the major parties: I suppose it gets written off or excused as a political fact of life in Ontario and Quebec, but it is centralist, and we are not the benefactors of it. An example, a case in point while I am digressing on this issue of the conference, is the tariff structure in

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MR. F. SIMMONS: Canada. There was some discussion of this issue and one of the points that came home to me once again is that the tariff structure as it exists in Canada today is very clearly designed to protect the manufacturing base of Ontario and Quebec. That alone is not an indictment unless in the process it does a couple of other things; if it works to our detriment -

MR. A. HICKMAN: Canada is an unnatural nation. The tariff laws are designed to make the trade run east and west when the

MR. HICKMAN: natural way for trade is North and South and that makes Ontario the beneficiary.

MR. SIMMONS: And the net effect of my point here, Mr. Speaker, is that the tariff barriers, as barriers to the entry of goods into Canada, are favouring the manufacturing industry of Ontario and Quebec. But at the same time is doing detriment to us in this way, that because we have tariff barriers to protect our manufacturing industry, so there are counter barriers, there are barriers because we have barriers protecting other segments of the economy, say, in the United States. And I would submit -

AN HON. MEMBER: There is no quorum.

MR. SPEAKER: A quorum has been called.
The hon. member for Burgeo -
Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to clue up that comment on the tariffs, I believe it works to our detriment because other tariffs get put in place, say in the United States, for example, the fish tariffs as an example, the finished product tariffs on fish, put in place to counter Canadian tariffs. And that fish tariff, just to use an example does not hurt Ontario and Quebec, but it certainly hurts our ability here, or our freedom here to have a more finished product in fish.

MR. HICKMAN: If the hon. gentleman will recall, first of all the same complaint that under the British North America Act, Canada has the exclusive right to negotiate tariffs. They will not consult with the provinces. The provinces are not asking to negotiate, they say, "Will you take this along?" And fish is negotiated with the EEC dealer, you know, the European Economic Community, in the same group of tariffs as agriculture products. We have asked to have it separated and you get told that that is not really any of your business.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. Well again I say to the Minister of Finance that I am not at all very expert in the area of tariffs. I understand very little about but I just wanted to - if we pursue this another four sentences he is going to exhaust my knowledge of the subject. I just realize, or think I realize, and I would like to be corrected if I am wrong, I do not know what the solutions are and the minister might be able to address himself to this, but I certainly see the problem or at least a tip of the problem and it is this, that the tariffs that are put in place to protect Ontario and Quebec are indirectly having an adverse effect on us because if you have tariffs which affect the United States in the manufacturing sector they are going to counter with other tariffs. That is my simplistic interpretation of the situation. And those tariffs, for example in the area of the fishery, mean that we are shipping our stuff out in cod block instead of a semi-finished product.

MR. HICKMAN: The hon. gentleman has already dealt with the increase in retail sales tax, but there is no question at all where the idea of the three per cent came from, reduction, it came from Ontario. And the real beneficiary is - it benefits everyone in Newfoundland that they do not have to pay that

MR. HICKMAN:

3 per cent for six months. But we in Atlantic Canada do not tax consumable goods. And Ontario manufactures all the weight goods. This is where you are going to see the increase in sales.

MR. NEARY: They will have to extent that for another six months if they (inaudible).

MR. HICKMAN: That is right. It was Parcv McKeough, it was his idea and he was quite blatant about it. He said that Ontario needed this to boost their industry.

MR. H. COLLINS: Should have cut it 6 per cent, I would say.

MR. HICKMAN: Yes. I think that imposes a greater strain on Canadian unity than the language issue.

MR. SIMMONS: Okay, and I think the minister again reinforces my point which is this, that it is time that all of us, whatever our party labels, looks for other alliances in terms of the regional consideration. Perhaps our alliance is more with -

MR. NEARY: The European Continent.

MR. SIMMONS: No, With Nova Scotia, whether its label is Liberal or Tory in terms of government, and with P.E.I and New Brunswick, whatever its label. It has an overriding label, and we all have to stick together on this. We are not for some reason convincing Ottawa - and I am talking Ottawa not in the governmental sense but in the party sense, whether it is Liberal, P.C. or NDP - we are not convincing them to the point - oh I know there will be fine phrases, the Tories will put things into election platform and, again to be nonpartisan, I think if you go back you will find the Liberals put things into party platform at the right time that they were going to do great things for Atlantic Canada and so on and so forth, but the reality under Mr. Diefenbaker and under Mr. Pearson and under Mr. Trudeau and under Mr. Clarke, if he becomes Prime Minister, will be no different, I submit.

The reality is that the decisions that are getting made are very much to the advantage of Central Canada. Take the St. Lawrence

MR. SIMMONS:

Seaway if you want to talk about a situation where the user-pay thing. Mr. Lang is talking about user-pay and how it has to be applied in time. Why does he not apply it to the St. Lawrence Seaway if he wants a good place to apply his user-pay? It is different there, a different kind of user-pay. The difference is that it runs through Ontario and Quebec. That is the difference.

MR. HICKMAN: That is right. Now Ontario, is it not Premier Regan who generally avails of every public opportunity to take a crack at Mr. Lang's user-pay.

MR. SIMMONS: Sorry?

MR. HICKMAN: Is it Premier Regan who never loses an opportunity to say some nasty things about Mr. Lang and his user-pay? Did he mention it?

MR. SIMMONS: He had some fairly colourful things to say both publicly and privately last week, I assure you.

MR. HICKMAN: Yes.

MR. SIMMONS: I do not know if I convey my point, that we have got more and more to realize that while there are unique aspects to our relationship in Atlantic Canada, I am not one of those advocates who figures we should all be called the Atlantic Province or whatever, but at the same time I believe there is an area for co-operation that we have not fully exercised among the Atlantic Premiers and I -

MR. HICKMAN: As long as we always keep our guard.

MR. SIMMONS: If Mr. Regan gets in bed with us it is going to be for his own reasons.

MR. HICKMAN: That is right.

MR. SIMMONS: So we should get in for the same reasons if we get in.

Okay, Mr. Speaker, that exhausts completely my knowledge of tariff policy, I assure you, perhaps more than exhausts. Now let me get back to something I understand a little bit more about. I was talking believe it or not a few minutes ago about consumables in student education at the elementary level. I am not finished with the minister yet, but just about. I want to talk about consumables for a

MR. SIMMONS:

minute. It was another decision made in the budget, another one of the desperation moves, one of the hard decisions and one wonders why the decision had to be made. Again I am hoping that the minister at some point will give us the figures, at some point early in the debate so we can talk intelligently, the money that is being generated by the student consumables, for example, the money generated by the dental care programme and those others because we are a bit at a loss here, and I admit this. that I was not able to find what additional dollars are being generated by these moves. It would be good to know that, to have our debate in some kind of a perspective. But I would guess that the consumables, the decision on student textbook or student book consumables is fairly small, fairly negligible in terms of the total dollar -

MR. HOUSE: (Inaudible) 100,000 pupils.

MR. SIMMONS: A half a million bucks, about half a million dollars.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am puzzled as to why we need that kind of a decision. I suppose every cent counts but it has got to count both ways.

MR. SIMMONS: If you save a dollar here you should be as interested in saving a dollar here. And look what I have here, look! This is going out to every youngster in the Province at a time when we cannot afford to buy them a scribbler.

MR. NEARY: One cent? The minister has to be kidding! One cent, my eyeball!

MR. SIMMONS: No, no, no, you have to print the things. But it cost money then. I mean if you have - Is the minister saying that they had 150,000 left?

MR. HOUSE: Pretty well.

MR. SIMMONS: Well somebody in Tourism better tell us where their estimates went wrong if they had 150,000 to spare. This is the Norma and Gladys brochure and that is a costly document we are looking at there. That must be some kind of a lithograph process. It is not a normal four colour printing. It is a lithograph job, I would say.

MR. HICKMAN: But whatever it is when you talk of the other provinces we have a better history and a stronger tradition of the Norma and Gladys of any of Atlantic Canada and you go into Nova Scotia and you will see thousands of these and you will go into Maine -

MR. SIMMONS: And the minister and I are making the same mistake. We take consumables or we take a little brochure and we latch on to it. And my point is not whether or not this brochure should have ever gone out. But I am saying what kind of convoluted reasoning on the one hand can save a dollar and spend it on the other hand. Either you need the money or you do not and nobody is telling me -

MR. NEARY: They are both (inaudible)

MR. HICKMAN: No, no!

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes it is.

MR. SIMMONS: You cannot allege, you cannot argue successfully -

MR. NEARY: It seems illegal. The Shirley Blanche was a Labrador schooner and that one is not.

MR. HICKMAN: The Shirley Blanche was owned by Garlands in Gaultois.

MR. NEARY: The Shirley Blanche was a Labrador schooner.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir has the floor exclusively.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Honestly, as soon as the minister and my colleague finish talking about Shirley and Blanche and the other girls, I will get on with the subject of Norma and Gladys. I am raising the larger question about false economies. That is the question I want to raise. The Minister of Education, no -

MR. HOUSE: No, I was just saying that that was available and they wanted to send it out to the schools. It cost \$1,761 to send that to the schools. Now it is less - or around a cent per pupil and that is the price that -

MR. SIMMONS: Distribution cost, the minister is talking about the distribution cost.

MR. HOUSE: That is right. It was there and you could either throw it out or send it to the kids.

MR. SIMMONS: So it is junk mail, junk mail.

MR. HOUSE: Yes, yes.

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, junk.

MR. SIMMONS: No, but let us let the minister err through perspective that it was 150,000 pieces of coloured paper sitting around because somebody in Tourism goofed up in terms of their projections. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, being 150,000 over on a brochure as expensive as this. That is a very long press run. That is not allowing the press to run another ten minutes and running over 1,000 or 1,500 extra. Some of these presses can run from 4,000 to 10,000 an hour. You are not talking about that kind of a mistake. You are talking about a press that was left running two or three days extra, four ways around if it is a four colour job. For a lithograph it might be a different matter. But you are talking about a deliberate decision to print a lot of brochures without knowing what you are going to use them for.

MR. NEARY: A plum for one of their buddies.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, and we come back to where this thing was printed.

MR. SIMMONS: Printed by Robinson-Blackmore.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Daily News.

MR. SIMMONS: No, no, not the Daily News, Robinson - Blackmore. Two different companies. Robinson - Blackmore prints the Daily News but it does not publish the Daily News.

AN HON. MEMBER: Andrew Crosbie.

MR. SIMMONS: I have no idea. This was printed by a good local firm, Robinson - Blackmore. That alone, Mr. Speaker, does not justify the squander that obviously went on here because the Minister of Education has told us - No, the Minister of Education has told us that at the time it was printed there was no intention to send it to the school youngsters. They became the recipients of what otherwise would have been junk. It was going to be thrown away he said.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, no, it is not junk.

MR. NEARY: No, it would fill a lot of teeth belonging to the school kids in this Province.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, it comes back - Look, Mr. Speaker, I can justify in health terms a six month trip for me and the member for St. John's Centre back to Sarasota. I can justify it in health terms. I can justify it at the public expense. I can justify it. I can justify moving this entire House to Miami Beach and sittings only at night if it is too cold to swim.

MR. MURPHY: Go out and gargle.

MR. SIMMONS: I can justify that kind of thing.

MR. NOLAN: (Inaudible) swimming pool.

MR. SIMMONS: But, Mr. Speaker, I would not suggest -

MR. MURPHY: Bought and paid for by my own (inaudible).

MR. SIMMONS: - it ought to be near the top of the list of priorities.

MR. NOLAN: Bought and paid for by bingo, bingo, bingo.

MR. SIMMONS: And that is what I have in my craw about this -

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible) scummy (inaudible)

MR. NEARY: Low, low, low.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, is that parliamentary?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I must ask hon. members not to interject.

I did hear a term, I am not sure if it was attributed to anybody or not, I do not know.

MR. A. MURPHY: If anybody accuses me, Mr. Speaker, of using money from bingos to build a swimming pool, I think it is a scummy statement to make.

MR. S. NEARY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman says he has been accused of something. I do not think anybody on this side of this House accused the hon. member of anything. The hon. gentleman, Sir, made an unparliamentary remark and there is no way he can weasel his way out of it. Your Honour has asked him to withdraw, retract, and apologize to the House and I think the member should do that, Sir, on the direction of Your Honour or stand the risk of being named.

MR. A. HICKMAN: Speaking to the point of order, I think my hon. colleague did not attribute it to anyone in particular but did say that if anyone, if any hon. member made an accusation concerning his conduct, which is exemplary, then he would consider that person having made that as to be something less than desirable.

MR. SPEAKER: As I understand it, the hon. Minister said that word and then interjected to see exactly what was meant by it and the hon. gentleman said if anybody accused him of doing such a thing that that would be a scummy remark. But then the House had the assurance that nobody accused the hon. gentleman of doing such a thing so we are in a hypothetical situation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. R. SIMMONS: I agree that the Minister for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) is best as a theory, best as an hypothesis. The fact is he is a cold, hard fact of life when he is around.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that he did look across the House to one of my colleagues, and we all know which colleague it was, and make a scurrilous accusation, and he should either have the intestinal fortitude, the decency to get up and make that charge specifically instead of by innuendo, or he should not make it at all. It is that kind of charge that lowers the dignity of the House. And he is the person who had been in the press, Mr. Speaker, as saying that he will resign because of the dignity of the House. Well I would suggest to him, without being unkind, that he is doing the right thing because the dignity of the House would shoot upwards the minute he leaves.

MR. S. NEARY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of order.

MR. S. NEARY: Your Honour knows that it is unparliamentary to hide behind newspapers in this House, Sir. The hon. gentleman is over there hiding behind a newspaper. It is bad enough to have it on your desk or down so that nobody can see it but it must look awfully bad, Sir, from the public galleries to be able to look down at the hon. Minister hiding, the hon. Minister is down low enough behind the desk as it is, but to hide behind a newspaper, I think it is unparliamentary, Sir. I believe I read it in Beauséjour the other day, Mr. Speaker, that you are not allowed to display letters or newspapers in public view in the House. It is in bad taste, Sir, and my hon. friend is right that the member for St. John's Centre is one of the ones, he and the Premier, who contribute more to lowering the dignity and the decorum of this House than anybody else here.

MR. A. MURPHY: I am not hiding behind it, I am just obstructing the view.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Certainly, the precedent in the house has been that members may read newspapers and it would be very difficult for

MR. SPEAKER: the Chair to have to decide at what level they would be held. So I do not think that I would wish to put myself into that position. As long as the precedent establishes that members may read newspapers, then presumably that is far as it can go.

Hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. P. SIMMONS: Okay, Mr. Speaker, I say to my colleague from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) we should obstruct no opportunity to get that member informed. If he does it through newspapers then - I hope he is reading the picture pages - if he does it through newspapers then more power to him, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us go back to this Budget we are trying to get a little debate going on here. We are talking about "NORMA AND GLADYS" both of them, and I am saying to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Finance it is not a question of

MR. SIMMONS: whether this is rubbish, as I happen to think it is. It is not a question of whether it is rubbish or junk or superfluous or surplus printing that was sitting around that otherwise would have gone to Robin Hood Bay. This government have taken much more valuable things than this to Robin Hood Bay.

MR. MORGAN: Do you know how much it cost? Do you want to know the facts, what it cost -

MR. NEARY: A fair amount. Sure.

MR. MORGAN: Paid by the federal government. paid by your colleagues in Ottawa?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I think that the rule requiring that only one person speak at a time and that there be no interruptions will be of benefit to all hon. members in the House collectively, because usually when there are these interjections, frequently things mushroom, snowball, and we end up in some procedural wrangle, and it would appear to me it is in the best interests of the House itself that there be no interruptions.

The hon. member.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now there he goes again, Mr. Speaker, the old bit of warped thinking that as long as you do not pay for it yourself, as long as the Ottawa Government pays for it, it is okay. It is what I call the old helicopter psychology - as long as it does not cost me a cent directly, then it is okay. And he applies his helicopter psychology now, Mr. Speaker, his helicopter philosophy to the Norma and Gladys brochure. And he says, 'As long as I pay for it out of my federal tax pocket instead of my provincial tax pocket, it is okay.' And that, Mr. Speaker, sums up the entire attitude of this government. We would do anything - what is our policy? -

MR. SIMMONS: anything as long as the feds pay for it. We will send junk mail to the youngsters if the feds pay for it. That is all we need, as long as the feds pay for it. They send us a marijuana kit - we will mail it out to the youngsters as long as the feds pay for it.

MR. NEARY: Nothing on the spruce budworm spray, no safety regulations.

MR. SIMMONS: It does not matter. What if they pay for all the barrels of - how do you say that word? Where is my buddy from Stephenville (Mr. McNeil) now that I need him? How do you say that clumsy word aminocard is it?

AN HON. MEMBER: Maticil.

MR. SIMMONS: Maticil, yes. If the Government of Canada bought the Minister of Tourism a gallon of this Maticil would he drink it because it was paid for? Free? Or would he send it to all the school youngsters? Or would he do as the government is doing now, let it sit on the tarmac, on the runway in Stephenville with the Maticil running down the side of the barrel, Mr. Speaker, and the barrels, one, two, three of them all dented up, Mr. Speaker. And, by the way, we should understand this picture here, I say for the Minister of Tourism, is not the stuff that is going to be sprayed, this is the undiluted solution. This is before they mix it, Mr. Speaker. This is the thing several hundreds of times over as strong as it is going to be when you get a whiff of it from the air some day when you are out having a picnic. This is not the real stuff, this is several times the real stuff we have here. This is the concentrated, undiluted stuff. So now when I get off in Stephenville, in addition to worrying whether it is raining or shining or whether the wind is blowing

MR. SIMMONS: too hard to keep my hat on, I have also got to worry about whether I am going to get a whiff of this stuff right from the barrels as I run across the runway. So I have to worry as I come in for a landing whether the pilot is going to make it or he is going to have a bad landing and ram those barrels at the end of the runway and get a good whiff of it.

MR. NEARY: You will soon have to get into a gas mask to go out on the West Coast.

MR. SIMMONS: I do not know, Mr. Speaker. It is so irresponsible, so absolutely irresponsible. And I just digress on this for a moment. What a shameful - you know, you would not believe it if you did not see it, if you did not have a picture. There are hundreds and hundreds of barrels of it, Mr. Speaker, undiluted, sitting on the runway, and I invite any member of the House to have a look at this picture. It is a picture my colleague from Stephenville (Mr. McNeil) loaned me for a moment. It is marked clearly on the front 'Matacil'. It is undiluted, it has not yet been mixed. This is the stuff that they are going to have to dilute eventually. There is the liquid running down the side. People who saw the barrel on the day this was taken and the day previous attest that that was not running down the side on the first two days. There are very heavy dents in the barrel. It is stored outside on the runway in an area that a plane in any accidental situation could clearly ram it. It is not behind any barricade. It is uncovered. It is out of doors despite the regulations. It violates every rule in the rule book. And talking about rule books, the federal Department of Health has had a rule book on the handling of this for three years, and do you know that the department up to now does not have a copy of it? Has not even gone to

MR. SIMMONS: the trouble of getting the Federal Department of Health regulations for handling this particular stuff.

Mr. Speaker, I used the phrase earlier, 'warped thinking', I used the phrase earlier. I wondered out loud on the subject of the dental care.-

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible) the Minister of the Environment.

MR. SIMMONS: - and on the subject of this, I wondered out loud if we were not dealing with a group of people who get a certain warped kick of doing things that would bring discomfort and threat to people. That is what we are dealing with here, Mr. Speaker. There is a certain - I am looking for the word but in the absence of it - it is a certain warped sinister kick somebody must be getting of exposing people to threats and discomfort and inconvenience and cost. That is what we are dealing with here.

MR. NEARY: Endangering their health.

MR. SIMMONS: It is frightening, Mr. Speaker, and this one here is absolutely shameful. I could hardly believe it when my colleague from Stephenville (Mr. McNeil) showed me this morning what we are dealing with here, hundreds and hundreds of barrels sitting on the runway. We are not talking only now about whether the spray will be done cautiously and with due care, we are talking about the large substantial potential for an accident unrelated to the actual spray effort itself, related, perhaps, to a plane that does not quite make it on a wet runway, or related to the situation my colleague referred to earlier where the effect of the sun on the asphalt might cause some kind of an explosion. I do not know what we are dealing with here and I do not want to raise false fears but there are certainly enough real fears contained in that photo without conjuring up any false ones. And the minister at the very least, instead of sitting there oblivious to what is going on, the minister ought to have somebody onto this already.

MR. SIMMONS: The attitude that everything we raise is raised for political reasons ought to take the back seat now, I say to the Minister of Forestry, to a very real fear that we have expressed, a very real fear. That situation, if we believe the manuals put out by the federal government, should not exist. That stuff should not be outdoors. It should not be in a damaged container. It should not be in a leaky container. It should not be in an area where it can be the brunt of an accident by an aircraft or a vehicle on the runway. It should not be there but it is, and not a word from the minister. He did not even speak in the petition. He did not even get up and express his concern that he would have a look at it and he was surprised to hear that that was the case. Perhaps he knows about it. Perhaps that is part of the plan. Perhaps they do not give a hang, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps he knew from the beginning it was going to be put there against the regulations, outdoors, in leaking damaged containers in an area where it could cause a major catastrophe, a major catastrophe, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Do we have a minister responsible for the environment in this Province? Or is he gone back to Sarasota?

MR. SIMMONS: And as far, Mr. Speaker, before we leave her, as far as the Norma and Gladys is concerned, I do not care how important she is or how important a naval issue this Province is, I do not care, when it comes to priorities, Mr. Speaker, this cannot be one of our educational priorities. This cannot be one of our educational priorities.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned the various cutbacks and the various taxes -

MR. NEARY: Call a quorum, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A quorum call.

MR. SPEAKER: I am informed there is a quorum present.

The hon. member. for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, perhaps one of the more serious blows in the budget was the news about hospital construction. I want to speak particularly about the Grand Falls Hospital though the comments can apply fairly equally to the other projects in Port aux Basques and in Clarendville, the Northwest Coast, the Burin Peninsula, but the Grand Falls one is nearest to my heart for a couple of reasons. Bishop's Falls, a few miles away is the place where I grew up and I have a fairly close knowledge of that area for that reason but also the people of Bay d'Espoir in half of my district, population-wise half the district, use the Grand Falls Hospital or, that is to say, they should use the Grand Falls Hospital. They do not because there is not the space there and in recent weeks even they have been obliged to, in recent months I should say, they have been obliged to lie on hospital cots in the corridor because there is not room to accommodate them in the rooms. The Grand Falls Hospital, Mr. Speaker, is one that needs to be expanded immediately. Indeed if you started construction today you would still be well behind in terms of meeting the need. Much has been said about it, Mr. Speaker, but nothing in the government's actions so dramatically draw attention to the two-faced policy of this government. They say one thing and they do something quite differently.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time, and perhaps this budget debate will be the time to bring it out, I believe it is time for the government to tell us exactly what the situation is on the Grand Falls Hospital. And that is not as simple a statement as it sounds. What is the situation? Is it that the funds were not there? Is that the situation, Mr. Speaker? That is what we are told. That is the official line if by official you mean the line from the Minister of Finance. That is the official line, there is no money, not enough money or the money is being spent elsewhere. That is not the only story we are hearing, Mr. Speaker. That is the story that the former Minister of Rural Development left the Cabinet

MR. SIMMONS:

over. That was his story in leaving, that the money was not there for the hospital, government could not go ahead for financial reasons. That is the story, the official story if you believe the Premier, that the money is not there. That is the story if you believe the Minister of Health and that should be enough. There are four members of the administration and one who is not in the administration now; the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan), the Premier, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Health, all tell us that it is fiscal reasons, that for fiscal reasons the hospital extension at Grand Falls did not go ahead. I suppose, Mr. Speaker, you could take them at their word, if there was not one of their colleagues in the Cabinet telling a very, very different story altogether, and I refer, of course, to the member for Green Bay (Mr. Peckford), the Minister of Mines and Energy.

When he writes his constituents he tells a very different story and I will tell it in his words not mine.

MR. NEARY: He is not writing more letters surely.

MR. SIMMONS: He had quite a raft of letters all about the same time, Mr. Speaker, and one of the letters he wrote and I am not - just let me be clear. It is not a letter as such. It was a column in the Green Bay news rather than a letter. I am not reading from that column. I am reading from a comment on that column. So I am reading from a comment in The Grand Falls Advertiser dated April 27 for the minister's information.

MR. PECKFORD: Not quoted from what I said.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, if the paper is quoted incorrectly I will not be quoting what the minister has said. I will make that clear as I go through.

MR. PECKFORD: Yes, because the paper did not include everything I said.

MR. NEARY: The minister sends all his letters to the Green Bay News.

MR. SIMMONS: The Advertiser, Mr. Speaker -

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MR. NEARY: I wonder if these letters are all sent out, published?

MR. SIMMONS: I will come to that.

MR. SIMMONS: The Grand Falls Advertiser of April 27th., Mr. Speaker, says as follows, I will not read the entire thing but I will try not to take it out of context just the same. It says as follows:

"The Concerned Citizens Committee"-

of Grand Falls presumably. "The Concerned Citizens Committee must have been taken back a little last week when they perused The Green Bay News. Therein was a report from the area's minister, Brian Peckford, who in effect advised his constituents not to get too hung up on the Central Newfoundland hospital issue. Said the member, 'This issue has really been a hot one. Do not know if everyone understands all the facts here. When you start a new structure you must finish it hence, it is not a matter of \$1 million this year but rather when you commit one nickel to a new project that means you must finish it. Hence, if you say that \$1 million is to be spent in 1978 on expansion of the Grand Falls Hospital you are saying, 'I am committing \$21 million to finish it and \$22 million every two years to maintain it.' He continued, 'Grand Falls Hospital is one of the best health care systems around. Let us not forget that from a pure district point of view the danger exists that our own hospital might be in jeopardy as its -

MR. PECKFORD: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. PECKFORD: Now if the hon. member for

Bay d'Espoir, whatever his district is, wishes to -

MR. SIMMONS: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! A point of privilege.

MR. SIMMONS: I have the right and the full right,

Mr. Speaker, to ask that all members of the House refer to me by my appropriate district, and if they are not sufficiently informed to do so they should not be allowed to participate in debate.

MR. PECKFORD: Okay, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. PECKFORD: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order is in effect.

MR. PECKFORD: The hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) is quoting from The Grand Falls Advertiser who reported part of a column that I put in The Green Bay News several weeks ago, and if the hon. member wants to get his facts straight, the fifth or sixth point made about the hospital expansion in Grand Falls concerned my concern for the district that I represent. The first five points of that article dealt with health care and fiscal reasons for it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where is the point of order?

MR. PECKFORD: That after considering all of those four or five points which were major, I then mentioned as a sixth one, as the member responsible, the question of the district concern. That in no way implies that I was saying something different from the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Health, or any other minister, or the Premier, in their articulation of government policy as it relates to hospital construction and expansion in this Province. And to try to use one or two points and not the whole article that was written unfairly misconstrues what I said and my position as it relates to hospital construction in this Province.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman, Sir, who is the editor of nasty letters in this Province, and is now claiming that he is misquoted, blaming it on the press, Sir, the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, has a tendency to put things in writing, obviously, that he regrets later.

MR. PECKFORD: No way. Not one -

MR. NEARY: And then the hon. gentleman then goes berserk in the House when my hon. friend raises it. But, Mr. Speaker, there is no point of order. The hon. Government House Leader sat there ashamed of his life, listening to his colleague to his right, the Minister of Mines and Energy, Sir, standing up on what allegedly was a point of order when in actual fact it was a delaying tactic. The hon. gentleman will have all kinds of time to speak before this House closes, because the government is not going to close the House down as quickly as they think. So the hon. gentleman will have lots of time to explain himself and to wiggle his way out of the situation that he got himself in with the Concerned Citizens Group in Grand Falls. This is not the time or the place to do it. My hon. friend can do it during the Budget Debate when the hon. gentleman speaks, but not when my hon. colleague has the floor. So there is no point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. House Leader.

MR. HICKMAN: On that point of order, Mr. Speaker. My hon. colleague is correct in what he is saying, that if any hon. gentleman reads from the press it cannot be read out of context. It has to be read in its totality.

MR. NEARY: He was reading in its totality.

MR. HICKMAN: The hon. gentleman is not reading it in its totality because he prefaced his remarks by saying that this was a quote in The Grand Falls Advertiser

MR. A. HICKMAN:

as taken from The Green Bay News, another newspaper. Therefore, if, as I understand it, the hon. gentleman undertook - it is not a question of undertaking, I guess the rules would make it obligatory anyway - that if it is out of context the hon. gentleman will give us the full facts.

MR. RIDEOUT: The hon. gentleman is quoting correctly from the Grand Falls Advertiser.

MR. A. HICKMAN: No, no.

MR. SIMMONS: No, No, only quoting bits and pieces.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I do not know really if there is a point of order. I did, in fairness to the Minister, quote his arguments about the cost of a project, both capital and ongoing, current, I said that which is not at all bearing on the point that I want to make about his jettisoning the Grand Falls Hospital project. Now the Minister makes the point, if you have six or seven arguments and the first five are not mentioned and then we jump to the sixth that that is somehow out of place. Well I do not think it is. If I give the Minister six gifts, the sixth one is no less in value because there were five others with it and if the arguments-

MR. PECKFORD: That is not the point (Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I do not care what the priority is, the minister is either for the Grand Falls Hospital or against it, and the sixth point tells me he is against it.

MR. SPEAKER: My understanding of the point of order is that the hon. Minister feels that the hon. member for Bay d'Espoir in quoting from a newspaper is misrepresenting the remarks he made, the totality of the remarks he made. I might just mention here, perhaps, one part of Beauchesne in regard to quoting from newspapers. This is in Section 157, Sub-section 6, and it reports a ruling given in 1933 and states as follows:- "The rule is quite clear that the quoting of a newspaper, an author, or a book which reflects upon debate before the House either directly or indirectly is entirely out of order because members are here to give their own opinion and not to quote the opinion

MR. SPEAKER: of others. Members may quote an article or book stating facts but a commentary on any proceeding or any discussion in the House with the object of swinging an opinion to one side or the other is out of order."

So that if in quoting from this article it was meant to comment upon the hon. Minister's remarks, this would be out of order. If the newspaper article is merely stating facts, this would be permitted. This seems to be in somewhat of a grey area here and I would have difficulty in making a very clear ruling, perhaps, without doing a lot of research and I wonder if it is required at this time.

MR. B. PECKFORD: I do not mean to interrupt but just for your information I think the article being quoted from by the member was an editorial in one of the papers.

MR. S. NEARY: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of privilege.

MR. S. NEARY: Was the hon. member interrupting Your Honour when Your Honour was making a ruling? That is completely unparliamentary, Sir, and Your Honour should whip the hon. member in line or have him thrown out of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Now if I may just finish off as I was just about to do really. It is as the hon. member for LaPoile mentions, not quite in order to interrupt a ruling. I am sure the hon. Minister did not mean in any way to slant the ruling being made but felt that he was assisting the ruling. But I would point out that it would be best if when a ruling is being made to hear the completion of the ruling and then, perhaps, comment after that.

In this particular instance as I say, it might be difficult to make a hard and fast ruling because I think we are in a bit of a grey area here. Perhaps it would suffice if I merely ask the hon. member for Burgeo Bay d'Espoir to make the point that he is outlining on the basis of his own convictions and then it is quite clear who is

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MR. SPEAKER: responsible for the statements being made in that instance and whether these are in or out of order would make it easier for the Chair to determine.

Hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, I am quite within the rules to quote any matters which are factual. I shall contain facts.

MR. SIMMONS:

I shall stay clear of drawing on the opinion of The Grand Falls Advertiser since I am quite capable on this point to give my own assessment of what I think of the fact that the minister is against the Grand Falls Hospital.

He says in his newsletter, and I am quoting from his newsletter, let us not forget that from a pure district point of view the danger exists that our own hospital might be in jeopardy as its present level of service is with each new development in Grand Falls. Now, Mr. Speaker, the question I want to raise is not about the validity of the opinion of the editor of The Grand Falls Advertiser, the question I want to raise grows out of two fairly certain facts, certainly in the sense that I have not heard any denials of them. On the one hand the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Health, the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) and the Premier tell the public that it is for financial reasons that the hospital extension did not go ahead, on the other hand the Minister of Mines and Energy, not only in a communication to his constituents via the Green Bay News, but also in a public speech in Baie Verte where he spoke to the Development Association or those who turned up, he could not get a quorum, but those who were there he spoke to. He is having trouble getting quorums these days, Mr. Speaker. He had a fund raising of his party association in Green Bay and there were so few people turned up that he lectured those who were not there. He took it out on the ones present and lectured them.

MR. RIDGOUT: Just like when you go to church.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. Preaching to the absent, you know, got vicious.

So I can understand, Mr. Speaker. I have been applying a little more compassion to the letter writing of the minister because I understand the frame of mind in which he is these days. The letter he wrote, that was tabled the other day, the letter to Mrs. Dwyer, the letter he wrote to the President of the Chamber of Commerce, and if anybody wants to lecture this House, Mr. Speaker, on what should be made public without whose permission, which I think was the brunt of his

MR. SIMMONS:

Letter to my colleague, the member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout), let him also give all the facts and let him tell the House that he has published what was allegedly private correspondence between himself and the President of the Chamber of Commerce in Springdale without asking the President. He took it upon himself to publish these letters. So let us hear none of this diabolical hypocrisy about permission from various people before you publish letters. Nobody was more surprised, Mr. Speaker, than the President of the Chamber of Commerce to see not one but two letters in subsequent issues of the Green Bay News from that minister.

MR. NEARY: Is that a Mr. Hewlett?

MR. SIMMONS: The President is a Mr. Ford Hewlett.

MR. NEARY: Ford Hewlett. That is a thought.

MR. SIMMONS: The President, yes. The minister writes his correspondence now through the press so he ought to be well adjusted to the tactic that was employed here last week in tabling the letter. He obviously wants his correspondence that way. That is the way he is dealing with the Springdale Chairman of Commerce.

MR. NEARY: You mean to say this minister who is criticizing my colleague for Baie Verte (Mr. Rideout) did exactly the same thing himself in a newspaper?

MR. SIMMONS: He subscribes, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier's line, it is okay if I do it but if you do it it is shocking.

But that is not the only letter and I understand, Mr. Speaker - I am not without compassion for him because he has had a very frustrated period the last month or so what with not a very big crowd turning up to his party dinner in Green Bay, I actually getting my picture in the Green Bay News, Mr. Speaker, imagine on the front page too. Now you think that is a small issue. He took exception to it in a letter, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: What!

MR. SIMMONS: Well, they are not going to believe me, I suppose, "Steve"

MR. SIMMONS:

so I had better table that letter too. But he did not like the fact, Mr. Speaker, that I - I only spent fourteen years in Springdale, Mr. Speaker, so I am hardly entitled to have my picture in the Green Bay News yet and somehow I got myself there and so he writes a letter to the Chamber of Commerce in Springdale. He had a bad week. I do not know if the typewriter was playing tricks on him, Mr. Speaker, or if the secretary was in a bad mood and she began writing malicious letters without his knowing it. I do not know what was going wrong that week, Mr. Speaker, but what a week of letter writing he had, what an absolute -

MR. NEARY: But is it all in the same week or is it over a period of time?

MR. SIMMONS: Well I am assuming, I am giving him the benefit of the doubt, I am assuming that nobody could be in that state of mind over an extended period. I am assuming it was all in the same week and I am giving him the benefit of the doubt on that one. Surely God, Mr. Speaker, nobody could be in that convoluted a frame of mind over an extended period without seeking some attention.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you while I am on this subject before I get back to the Grand Falls Hospital because it all has to do, Mr. Speaker, with the way our bucks are being spent. Mr. Speaker, when I realize that a minister of the Crown is spitting out this bile at my expense on the citizens of this Province then, Mr. Speaker, it is frightful, absolutely

MR. SIMMONS:

frightful. And I commend my colleague from Baie Verte-White Bay. An attempt was made today to leave the impression that somehow he had done something that was dishonourable. I say, Mr. Speaker, if he had sat on that letter he would have done a dishonour to this House, and would have done a disservice to the lady from Baie Verte. The public should know the way that people are being harassed by this minister and this is not the first example. I have another letter beside that that I will table to show you how he harasses people, not just one Mrs. Dwyer but many dozens of people. If he does not get his way he kicks a little tantrum.

Well, listen to this tantrum, Mr. Speaker, out at your expense. How do you like this one, addressed to Mr. Ford Hewlett, Springdale Chamber of Commerce? And again, Mr. Speaker, let it be known that I am not doing the dishonourable thing of making this letter public. The minister himself sent a copy of this letter to the Green Bay News. Now he may have done it under duress. Somebody might have forced him to do it. I do not know exactly what the case is. I do know that it was not done with the acquiescence or the approval of the president of the Springdale Chamber of Commerce. I do know that. But for whatever reason, Mr. Speaker, this letter was written. Now shall I set the stage to save time? Shall I set the stage for hon. members?

I lived for fourteen years in Springdale. I still maintain a residence in the district of Green Bay about fifteen miles from Springdale on the highway a mile or so from the residence of the hon. Minister of Mines the place known to a lot of people as Cons Beach, fifty miles West of Grand Falls. I have occasion to go into Springdale. I buy my groceries there. I buy my various other supplies there. I celebrated Christmas-time there. I have lots of reasons to go to Springdale as a resident of that immediate area. The Green Bay Liberal Association had a cocktail party about two or three weeks ago on the occasion of the visit to Springdale of Mr. Buchanan, the Federal Minister of Public Works and the Federal member for the area Mr. Bill Romkey. There were

MR. SIMMONS: a number of events that day in which Mr. Buchanan was involved. There was a meeting on the proposed ferry terminal for Springdale and the ferry service between Springdale and Little Bay Islands and Long Island and that meeting was held in the afternoon about five or five-thirty with Mr. Buchanan being the main speaker, if I may put it such, Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Rompkey. Mr. Buchanan also attended a Chamber of Commerce dinner, and I suppose the Chamber of Commerce invited him there. That would make a lot of sense. At the first meeting he was at the invitation of the town council of Springdale, Little Bay Islands and Long Island. At the second event, the dinner he was there at the invitation of the Springdale Chamber of Commerce, I assume, I do not know I was not at the dinner. At the third event which took place at seven o'clock that evening the minister Mr. Buchanan was there at the invitation of the Green Bay District Liberal Association. They had actually done the unspeakable, they had done what the minister had tried six days before to do unsuccessfully, they had actually got together the troops, they had called together the troops, the people who dared to call themselves Liberals without asking the minister. That is what they did. , Mr. Speaker, in the full light of day they go and meet, they actually get together, a bunch of them -

MR. PECKFORD: You had better check with the mayor. He is a Liberal. You had better produce all the correspondence now that you have started.

MR. SIMMONS: To his credit, Mr. Speaker. I have none of the correspondence only what the minister made available to me through the press, Mr. Speaker, none of it.

MR. PECKFORD: You did not ask for it.

MR. SIMMONS: I will just tell the fact as I know them. If the minister has another version of the facts - I hope he does because what is in the letter is not fact it is fiction and I am going to demonstrate that to you in a minute. It is not fact what is in that letter, it is absolute, convoluted fiction. Now let us get the sequences of events straight because it is important before I read this letter if you want

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Tape No. 3431

AH-3

MR. SIMONS: to understand it. Five-thirty the minister, Mr. Buchanan, attends a meeting on the ferry, a meeting, I presume, at the invitation of the various town councils involved; Six o'clock or six-thirty he attends a dinner at the invitation, I presume, of the Springdale Chamber of Commerce. I was in the same restaurant at the hotel there and I saw them down in the corner but I was sitting right up in the other end with two or three friends but he and the Chamber of Commerce, as far as I could see, were the only people at that table and the member Mr. Rompkey. The third event was a cocktail hour sponsored by the Green Bay Liberal Association to which the minister was invited - and that is not unusual he happens to be a Liberal, and the member was invited, Mr. Rompkey, and it was

MR. SIMMONS:

For this event I was invited.

The President of the Liberal Association happens to be a very good friend of mine, Mr. Maurice Budgell of King's Point. He 'phoned me and said, 'Would you like to come out for the cocktail party?' Now those are the three events which, to my knowledge, Mr. Buchanan attended. He may well have attended other events. The first, I presume, invited by councils, I do not really know. The minister indicates it might be otherwise. I will tell you this because I have checked with this individual, and it needs to be said before I read this letter, the President of the Liberal Association did not invite Mr. Buchanan to the meeting of councils. I am sure that comes as no big surprise to you. The President of the Liberal Association did not invite the minister to meetings of councils. You might think that is a stunned understatement, but wait until I read the letter. The President of the Liberal Association did not invite Mr. Buchanan to the meeting of the Springdale Chamber of Commerce. Now we think that is a fair statement given the fact he is not even in the Chamber of Commerce. The President of the Liberal Association did invite Mr. Buchanan to the Liberal cocktail party and invited me too, by the way, and that is what I went for.

Now I was in Springdale at 5:00 in the afternoon; the minister was late arriving. I had no invitation to go to council meetings, I did not go out for that reason, I was not invited to any council meetings. I was standing around in the lobby of the Springdale council office and I got to meet a number of good friends of mine from Little Bay Islands, Long Island, Springdale, including a lot of great Liberals, which is what really ruffles the minister, that there were so many Liberals in key positions

MR. SIMMONS: out there - that is what really rankles him. Imagine having to deal with people who do not swallow hook, line and sinker everything you say. Imagine that:

So I was standing around, and the chairman for Little Bay Islands - not my good friend, the Liberal Mayor of Springdale, as the minister points out, but my good friend, the chairman from Little Bay Islands - wondered if I would like to come into the meeting. So I went in and sat at the meeting, and it was no time at all before a photographer showed up, and being the good politician that I am, I get in every picture I can, Mr. Speaker. Every picture I can I get in on it. But that day, Mr. Speaker, I did not even have to worry about getting in on it because as I sat there waiting to have the picture taken of Mr. Rompkey and Mr. Buchanan, the photographer, himself said, 'Roger, do you want to get in on this one?' You bet I did! You should have seen me move from that chair. I made sure I was there before the shutter clicked, and lo, and behold! In all my glory there I am on the front page - not of the Newfoundland Herald I will make that one of those days - but on the front page of the Green Bay News.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was my crime. Now listen to the punishment: Letter; Mr. Ford Hewlett, Springdale Chamber of Commerce, Springdale, Green Bay, Newfoundland AOJ 1T0. "Dear Sir: Thank you for your letter of April 27, 1978 on the subject of Mr. Buchanan's visit. In view of the fact that you had sent me the correspondence on the meeting, I could only assume that the Chamber of Commerce was instrumental in setting the thing up and now see that the Chamber was but one pawn in a piece of political showmanship."

MR. SIMMONS: I am led to wonder whether Mr. Rompkey deliberately stayed away from the previous ferry meeting, f-e-r-r-y, ferry meeting so that he could pull off the Buchanan visit as a political coup in which he would not have to share any credit with myself or Mr. George Baker.

Now continuing these ramblings of a mature mind, "My feelings along this line are further reinforced by the fact" - by the fact, now, Mr. Speaker, not the opinion. This is the minister who is so adamant on separating fact from fiction and opinion and comment and that kind of thing. Just listen to this, "My feelings along this line are further reinforced by the fact that the President of the local Liberal Association placed calls inviting people to the meeting." Now there were three meetings, Mr. Speaker, and I tell you that Mr. Budgell invited people to one meeting, a cocktail party of his own party association, which I assume is his right. I shall score him and rap him on the knuckles for not asking the minister whether he could have that kind of a meeting in a Tory district. Imagine the audacity, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: He used to go to Liberal meetings one time.

MR. SIMMONS: "My feelings along this line are reinforced," the minister says, "by the fact that the President of the local Liberal Association placed calls inviting people to the meeting." How is that for research, Mr. Speaker? "Furthermore," - listen to this, this is beautiful, Mr. Speaker, I have it for posterity - "Furthermore, the Green Bay News showed

MR. SIMMONS: an official photo. I have never been in an official photo before. It had always been unofficial. They took them just you know as part of the proceeding. But this one was an official one. I have to go back and check that paper and see how it was officialized, see whether there was a stamp on it, or an insignia or some kind of a coat of arms, but it was an official photograph, no question about that, Mr. Speaker. Imagine the insight of the letter writer who was not present by his own admission, was not present at these gatherings, but knows that the photograph was official.

I must insist in future that photographers take only unofficial pictures of me, for those papers.

MR. RIDEOUT: Especially for the front pages.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, where are we?

"Furthermore," I quote again, "The Green Bay News showed an official photo of the dignitaries gathered, one of them being Mr. Roger Simmons, M.H.A."

I mean how despicable has the crime got to be before the editor is rounded up and put in the Mental for thirty days, Mr. Speaker, for an examination. Imagine publishing a picture of me on the front page of the paper.

DR. KITCHEN: He did not call his buddy, the editor did not.

MR. SIMMONS: Boy, oh boys, oh boys, oh boys, and that despicable character, Mr. Speaker, is editing a paper, in one of the great, free constituencies of this Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, quoting again, "Mr. Simmons represents a district on the South Coast of the Province," that is the first fact in the letter so far. The first fact in the

MR. SIMMONS: letter so far, Mr. Speaker.

"Mr. Simmons represents a district on the South Coast of the Province and has absolutely nothing to do with the ferry system," F-e-r-r-y.

"I can only assume," this is a brilliant assumption, Mr. Speaker, "I can only assume therefore that his presence was politically motivated."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Did it occur to him that perhaps I just wanted a drink? Did it occur to him that I was hungry. Imagine that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in fairness to him I will read the whole letter.

"The matter of the ferry system is a serious one and should be above politics."

MR. LUSH: Certainly.

MR. SIMMONS: "I am disgusted that the people of Green Bay and an important non-political issue were dragged into a political affair to further the career of certain Liberal politicians."

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh my oh my. It is full of it, is it not? Just full of it.

MR. SIMMONS: The fact is, Mr. Speaker, and I say it again for the record, I do not intend to run down there. I am too busy getting ready in Humber West. I do not intend to run down there, as much as I would like to. He should not be so paranoid. He should leave his paranoid pills home.

MR. HICKMAN: Can we now tell the people of Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir that the hon. gentleman is going to leave?

MR. SIMMONS: The minister can tell the people of Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir what he wishes, they will not believe him anyway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, rapport is a convenient way of describing the minister's relationship in Grand Bank.

MR. NEARY: Why did the Minister of Mines and Energy just run off -

MR. SIMMONS: There are other ways of describing the relationship. We could call it the thirty-eight per cent relationship.

Mr. Speaker, in all fairness I read the rest of the letter, most assuredly, as follows: "This kind of ruthless manipulation of public affairs for political ends is dangerous business and I implore the Chamber to be more careful of such matters in future."

AN HON. MEMBER: The saviour of mankind.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, just to get it in context. The Chamber had nothing to do with it. They committed the sin - hearing the minister was coming to town they called him up about two days before and said, "Would you like to have dinner with us?" That was their total involvement. Now here is fifteen or twenty of his constituents sitting on this committee, this executive chamber, and without checking his facts, because he is in a nasty letter writing mood, he rushes out to condemn some more people. I have heard of people burning their bridges, Mr. Speaker, but I never heard of a bridge bonfire before. I never heard of a fellow burning all his bridges in the one big fire. Surely, just for the psychological kick, do it one at a time, one a day, one a week, or something, but burn them altogether.

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Tape No. 3432

MM - 4

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that letter was in reply to a letter. As I say, all I have is what was in The Green Bay News. The minister did not send me the first. The minister wrote another letter, I can only assume from the context, a little more full of vile than this one and the President of the Chamber of Commerce replied, telling him in gentle terms that in effect

Mr. Simmons: What happened was that they committed the sin of inviting the minister to a dinner, and that is what they got in return from their hon. member.

Now, let us talk about honour, Mr. Speaker. We heard how honourable my colleague is from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) today, and we want to adjudicate his honour against the member for Green Bay (Mr. Peckford) and take this as evidence.

MR. NEARY: They got him in a strait jacket out there now.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, -

AN HON. MEMBER: Awful! Awful!

MR. SIMMONS: I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is any word - is there any word, any phrase in parliamentary terms for flooring an item? It is too low to go on the table this one. Could we floor this, Mr. Speaker? Or sub-floor it as the case may be?

MR. NEARY: Put it out in the men's room on the john.

MR. SIMMONS: I ask, Mr. Speaker, that this item be sub-floored.

MR. NEARY: No, lay it on the john.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, continuing our Dear Abby special we have another letter.

MR. NEARY: What? All in the same week?

MR. SIMMONS: The mandarins, the officials of the Department of Mines and Energy ought to be commended, Mr. Speaker. Just the sheer volume of words - they should get paid by the word, not by whether the words make sense, but by the word, they should be paid by the word for what this minister spits out.

Now I have, Mr. Speaker, with my colleague's permission, I have to invoke his name here, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes.

MR. SIMMONS: You see the sinner here was not the President of the Chamber of Commerce in this case, nor was it Mrs. Dwyer -

AN HON. MEMBER: The people of Green Bay.

MR. SIMMONS: - in Baie Verte. The sinner here was several hundreds of people from Green Bay, several hundreds, Mr. Speaker. And the accomplice in this despicable scheme was none other than the nefarious

Mr. Simmons: member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

MR. NEARY: The unofficial Ombudsman.

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

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

MR. HICKMAN: The unparliamentary words that the hon. the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) is using about his colleague the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) I submit have to be withdrawn, nefarious, accomplice, and these nefarious schemes, You know, because of the co-operation existing I feel obligated, Mr. Speaker, to come to the defense of the hon. the gentleman for LaPoile and ask that these words be withdrawn.

MR. NEARY: To that point of order, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): To that point of order.

MR. NEARY: Really, Mr. Speaker, there is no point of order.

My hon. friend is laying out a case just as a lawyer would lay out a case in court before a judge or a jury. My hon. friend is laying out a case using most colourful language, Sir, in doing it to stress his point, and I would submit that my hon. friend be allowed to carry on uninterrupted by the hon. Minister of Justice, the Government House Leader.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) trend he was on.

MR. NEARY: All the hon. gentleman was trying to do was to get my hon. friend off the trend that he is on. And my hon. friend intended to carry on. There is no name calling, Sir. There is no point of order at all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): Order, please! I understand the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is not taking offense against any words pointed in his direction.

MR. NEARY: That is right, Your Honour.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): The hon. the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Let the record show that he admits to the nefariousness, Mr. Speaker, the subject or the circumstances surrounding this letter was a petition on electricity which the people of Green Bay

Mr. Simmons: signed in their hundreds, -

MR. RIDEOUT: That is right. They did.

MR. SIMMONS: - and submitted to a member of the House of Assembly. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the people of Green Bay were very wise in sending it to an Opposition member, because they learned that the member for Labrador West (Mr. Rousseau) recently sat on a petition for several days. The Premier regularly sits on petitions. He had one from my district which I suggested to my constituents that they address to him because I thought it would have more weight being presented by the Premier.

MR. NEARY: And we do not know how many more they are sitting on over there.

MR. SIMMONS: And after I mentioned in the House that I was aware of the existence of that petition then he presented it, ~~he did not~~ present it he got the member for Mount Pearl (Mr. N. Windsor) arena to present the petition, a month after he had it. A month!

So it is well known. I think the people of Green Bay are fairly astute.

MR. HICKMAN: I am sure the hon. gentleman is aware that there was a time in this House when the bringing in of a petition by an hon. gentleman respecting another hon. member's district was practically treated as a crime, and I as Attorney General was ordered to conduct an investigation. Remember that?

MR. SIMMONS: But the minister found, in his capacity then as minister, that there was nothing wrong with it at all. Soon after I came into this House, the then member for Grand Falls, Mr. Senior, actually brought in two petitions from my colleague's district, the member for Fogo (Captain Winsor). Because at that time he was down there sounding around. He could not get himself re-elected in Grand Falls, and the Tories had sent him down there to sniff out Fogo. And after the presentation of petitions he found he could not get elected down there either. A lot like the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) now could not get elected down there.

MR. HICKMAN: I am only helping -

MR. SIMMONS: I know what the minister is trying to do and he is doing it only half well.

MR. HICKMAN: No, just for the record, to complete the story -

MR. SIMMONS: For the record, Mr. Speaker, for the record.

MR. HICKMAN: - what happened was he was then referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

MR. SIMMONS: But since then, I say to the minister, we have a new regime, we have a regime characterized by the kind of freedom that was implicit in that letter I read a minute ago.

MR. HICKMAN: That is right.

MR. SIMMONS: Where the Liberal Association President would have to ask the Tory member could he have a cocktail party, could he have a gathering of his own clan?

MR. HICKMAN: No. No.

MR. SIMMONS: That is the kind of freedom we have now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HICKMAN: Right, but I am talking about a different administration.

MR. SIMMONS: Where the former Minister of Rural Development goes out to Northern Arm and threatens to cut off a grant, an RDA grant if the fellow does not vote Tory in the last by-election where my colleague from Exploits (Dr. Twomey) got elected. Tell me about the kind of freedom - or where he went into another community where - not only went into a community, put it in writing, because I tabled that letter in the House a year or so ago, where the minister and also an executive assistant to the former Minister of Rural Development, actually went to people and said, "You will not get your application approved if you do not tone down what you are saying in your paper about the Tory Government." I have that in writing and it was on the table of the House a year or so ago. So do not tell me about freedom, Mr. Speaker, because I know all about freedom as practiced by this hon. crowd.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am talking about a petition sent to this House by hundreds of people in the constituency of Green Bay, who are a very astute people, Mr. Speaker, so astute that they realize that it was useless to send a petition to a government member, particularly if that government member was also the fellow responsible for something, like the amount of electricity rates, the Minister of Mines and Energy. How stunned would they have to be, Mr. Speaker, to send a petition to somebody like that? So what did they do? They got an Opposition member to present the petition and they sent it in to my colleague from LaPoile (Mr. Neary). Well, in time the petition was presented. The minister was in the House at the time and he writes a letter to hundreds of people, the same letter, it was individually addressed and so on, but it went to hundreds of people in Green Bay district.

MR. NEARY: You mean householders letters?

MR. SIMMONS: No. It was individually addressed. He took the names off the petition and mailed it to all the people who had signed the petition. For example, in a number of cases in his own community of South Brook he actually sent a letter to Mrs. - I will use other names - Mr. John Jones and Mrs. Mary Jones. He did not even bother to couple them up as man and wife. And I know one house where four letters went into the same household.

MR. NEARY: Were civil servants involved in that, that political -

MR. SIMMONS: I presume, Mr. Speaker, Perhaps it was typed by the - No, well the typist's signature has the initials of one of his present secretaries.

MR. NEARY: Well then, he should be sent a bill for it.

MR. SIMMONS: One of his present secretaries, Mr. Speaker. I know her well. I will not -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, let us get back to this letter. It calls -

MR. HICKMAN: Should bill all M.H.A.'s for letters.

MR. NEARY: Off petitions, Take names off petitions? The time!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, no amount of exchange with the Minister of Justice can justify the scurrilous business of taking a petition, one of the basic rights of people, and then taking their names off the petition in trying to intimidate them and writing them each a letter. But not just any letter, Mr. Speaker, this particular letter. Just listen to it.

MR. NEARY: That is not a householders letter.

MR. SIMMONS: "Dear So and So, This letter is in response to your signature on a recent petition presented in the

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Tape No. 3435

NM - 4

MR. SIMMONS: House of Assembly regarding electrical power rates."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the letter then has three more paragraphs. The second paragraph addresses itself to the argument of electricity and why the rates are up and so on and so forth. And I can read that if it is the wish of the Committee of the House. It addresses itself completely to why the rates are up and so on.

And then the next paragraph says, "Secondly, this petition is somewhat of an embarrassment to me."

MR. RIDEOUT: Excuse me.

MR. SIMMONS: "As your member," listen to the next, it does not say, I would hope, or I suggest, or I think you should, he says this, "As your member I expect citizens to present petitions to me."

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Tape 3436

EC - 1

MR. SIMMONS:

God has spoken.

MR. RIDEOUT:

So be it.

MR. NEARY:

Heil Hitler!

MR. SIMMONS:

"I expect citizens to present petitions to me for presentation in the House of Assembly. This petition was presented by Mr. Stephen Neary, M.H.A." Any wonder why I call him nefarious, Mr. Speaker? Shocking! "It puts me in a bad spot -"

MR. NEARY:

Did he spell my name properly?

MR. SIMMONS:

Oh, yes. He goes on to say, "It puts me in a bad spot when a group of constituents present a petition in the House through an Opposition member. You may not have known who started the thing, but it is not a good policy to sign a petition without knowing what or who is behind it."

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was asked earlier if it was all in the same week. Well, the letter to Mrs. Dwyer was written on the 3rd of May - the second was written on the 3rd of May, 1978. The one to Mr. Hewlett was written late April - there is no date on it, but it was late April obviously; it appeared on April 27th. And this one, Mr. Speaker - it was a bad, long, hard week for the minister - it was written not on the 3rd May or late April, it was written on the 17th of May, 1977. It had been a long, long week, Mr. Speaker, a long week.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what do the people in Green Bay say about this? What do the people in this town that I dared to visit without an affidavit from the minister -

MR. MORGAN:

I know what the next electorate will say.

MR. SIMMONS:

There he is. The beer baron burps again!

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Tape 3436

EC - 2

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, if I have to write those many nasty letters I could not even measure up to them. If they ever give awards, Mr. Speaker, you know, Actra type awards, the member for Bonavista South will get the Clinging on to Cabinet by Fingernails award. win it clean. Here is the fellow who, not so long ago the member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) was saying was a publicity hound. Remember those days? The publicity hound?

AN HON. MEMBER: That is right.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, how have the cheeky bit their lips in recent months! Anything for a Cabinet seat.

But talking about newspapers, Mr. Speaker, let me submit to the House my recommended reading list for this week. There is a new paper called The Village Voice.

MR. LUSH: That is a good one.

MR. NEARY: The village idiot?

MR. SIMMONS: No, you are talking about the contents of one item. I am talking about The Village Voice, the newspaper which has now just printed its second edition.

A tremendous paper, Mr. Speaker, but in all its glory on the front page is 'gentleman Jim'.

MR. LUSH: Answering questions.

MR. NEARY: The beer baron.

MR. RIDEOUT: Did he have permission from the Minister of Mines and Energy for that?

MR. SIMMONS: So I recommend you buy it, Mr. Speaker, if there is a copy -

MR. NEARY: Was it a paid ad?

MR. SIMMONS: Well, it did not say it was a paid ad - put it that way, but it was a touching story,

MR. SIMMONS: I must say, absolutely touching, and you should read it - The Village Voice, front page, back page, several other pages - one of those true romance type stories, you know, continuing nausea, this kind of thing.

MR. MORGAN: A pity you did not -

MR. SIMMONS: Yes.

AN HON. MEMBER: Nothing like paper -

MR. SIMMONS: I am tempted to say some more about it, Mr. Speaker, but it would all be unparliamentary.

Well, here, Mr. Speaker, is another letter for the 'Dear Abby' column. The minister should have no trouble, Mr. Speaker, finding a job when he is kicked out of politics. He could, as a matter of fact, compete with 'Dear Abby'. You could have 'Peckford's Poison Pen' - something alliterative like that, you know. It had better be a long column, Mr. Speaker, I suggest because there is no way he could unload all his bile on a weekly basis in a column. Now he has every day to do it and a half dozen secretaries you are paying for, so it would need to be a long, long column, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, could we sub-floor that one?

Now, Mr. Speaker, what got me off on this bit of a digression, this 'Peckford's Poison Pen' column was that I dared to quote from another bit of literature of his in the Green Bay News where he told us in fairly direct language that what the Premier is telling is not true, what the Minister of Health is telling is not true - 'not money at all, we could not agree. We could not agree in Cabinet on the extension,' that is the message. And if it is not clear enough in those words ask the people in Baie Verte, the twenty-five or thirty who did turn up

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Tape 3436

EC - 4

MR. SIMMONS: to the Development Association -
not enough to have a quorum, but they went ahead with the
meeting anyway. Could not get a quorum there, he could not,
but they went ahead, and the

MR. SIMMONS: and the development association annual meeting was told by this same minister that he voted - I am quoting him directly now -

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. SIMMONS: -that he voted in Cabinet - and where is the old Cabinet solidarity thing now? Where is it now? - he voted in Cabinet against the Grand Falls hospital extension and he would do so again.

DR. KITCHEN: And he is hoping for support.

MR. F. W. ROWE: Resign.

MR. SIMMONS: So, Mr. Speaker, let us do away with this myth about the money situation as it applies to Grand Falls. The Cabinet could not agree on it, they could not agree either on the need or they could not agree on the political expediency and I suggest the latter.

MR. NEARY: What about the Minister of Health? Which way did he vote?

MR. FLIGHT: He did not vote at all.

MR. RIDEOUT: He fell out of bed.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister was so busy not getting in bed but staying there that he probably did not vote at all. So what is the truth of it, Mr. Speaker? What is the truth of this situation? Was the hospital cancelled because there was a lack of money or because there was a lack of agreement? If I am to believe the Minister of Mines and Energy it was because of a lack of agreement in Cabinet. He said that publicly. He did not agree, Mr. Speaker, which brings us back to the subject of the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) who, unfortunately, is not in his seat. Where does this leave the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) now, Mr. Speaker, that the word is out that it was not money at all that sunk his ship?

MR. NEARY: It was politics.

MR. SIMMONS: It was not money, it was politics. It was not money it was the continuing leadership struggle and on this round the Minister of Mines and Energy won out over the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan).

MR. SIMMONS: The member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) wanted the hospital extension, the Minister of Mines and Energy did not want it so they did not get it.

MR. FLIGHT: - said that in Grand Falls.

MR. NEARY: In the meantime the Minister of Fisheries tears the fabric right down the middle not getting involved, not getting his hands dirty.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. F. B. ROWE: He did not win the last time and he is still smarting.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS: Where is the minister for Grand Falls now that we need him?

DR. KITCHEN: Where is the Minister of Mines and Energy?

MR. NEARY: I have not heard any sirens coming up toward the building.

MR. SIMMONS: Let us give the member for Grand Falls some credit now. He is very descriptive about one subject. He might have been led down the garden path on the Grand Falls hospital but about one subject he is very descriptive and that is the Minister of Justice. He knows where he stands on the Minister of Justice. He said, "If I were starting an undertaking business I would hire Mr. Hickman." What a recommendation. I say to the gentleman now in the Chair he better beware he could be out of business any day at all.

MR. NEARY: What paper was that in?

MR. SIMMONS: That is the good old Evening Telegram on March 18th.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: If I were starting an undertaking business I would hire Mr. Hickman.

MR. NEARY: What would he do? Would he be the official embalmer or make up -

MR. SIMMONS: I would say he would be the official embalmer. I thought you were talking about the member for Grand Falls.

May 24, 1976

Tape No. 3437

M-3

MR. SIMONS: He would be advised to be the embalmer, he has had enough experience, he has had plenty of experience the member for Grand Falls being the embalmer I will tell you that. They really put him under on this one. They really did a snow job on him on this one. He gets out of Cabinet and then he goes before the people of Grand Falls thinking he is going to be held up by Cabinet who will maintain the party line that it is lack of

Mr. Simmons: money. And that is a very good one to sell, you know. I resigned because my colleagues would not come through for lack of money, and then lo and behold! after he gets out they pull the rug under him. And this young fellow Peckford goes down to Baie Verte and says, "Now between me and you," and I would like to report it, he also said that, I would like to report it, "money had nothing to do with this, I voted against it." And now here is the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) who gave the constituents of Grand Falls the decided understanding, the distinct understanding that he had resigned because this issue could not be resolved from a financial standpoint and that the government was doing the best it could and yet he disagreed. The fact is now that the people of Grand Falls, and therefore the people of my district who use that hospital, and the people of Bishop's Falls, Botwood and those areas out through, even into Green Bay, these people were used as pawns by the member for Grand Falls either unwittingly or otherwise, they were used as political pawns.

And while we are also on the subject of the member for Green Bay (Mr. Peckford) who expresses great concern about the effect on Green Bay of the Grand Falls Hospital extension he should know also that no fewer than 1,200 of his own constituents in Green Bay signed a petition in the last two weeks supporting the extension at Grand Falls, 1,200 people in Green Bay affixed their names, their signatures to a petition supporting the extension in Grand Falls. So he is even out of touch with his own crowd. He should find out what the people in Green Bay want before he takes such a rational action.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, can we get the Minister of Mines and Energy back, Sir, so he can hear some of this. Let us have a quorum call.

MR. SPEAKER (MR. YOUNG): A quorum call.

There is a quorum present.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: There is no quorum.

MR. SPEAKER (MR. YOUNG): A quorum call.

MR. SPEAKER (MR. YOUNG): We have a quorum.

The hon. the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I rather like this technique because unlike the member for Green Bay (Mr. Peckford) there is no way he could get a quorum in Baie Verte. He could not get anybody to listen to him not even under duress. But here I can get a few in, albeit under duress, to pretend they are listening or to sit there and -

AN HON. MEMBER: Get your own crowd in.

MR. SIMMONS: certainly it is inspirational. Well, I cannot see these, the seating arrangement is all wrong here. You know, Mr. Speaker, I like the United Nations arrangement a lot better where you go to the podium and you can see everybody. Here the fellows you really want to impress are all sitting behind you, you see. You know there is no way you are going to make a dent on the fellows opposite anyway with the possible exception of the Minister of Education, himself an erudite, educated type who may yet yield to reason. It is a possibility, however slim.

Mr. Speaker, this Grand Falls Hospital shemozzie has to rank as one of the bigger boo-boos of this government because you see it demonstrates

MR. SIMMONS: that there is no such thing as a successful liar. To be a successful liar, Mr. Speaker, you have to remember all the other lies you told so you can tell something which is consistent with all the past lies. This whole shemozzle demonstrates the dangers of trying to be a successful liar, how difficult it is.

You see, Mr. Speaker, after all I have told you about who agreed with whom, the Premier, the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan), the Minister of Health and the Minister of Finance on one side saying it was Finance, and the member for Green Bay (Mr. Peckford) on the other side saying it was because I would not give my vote, on top of all that, my colleague from Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) reminds me - because he was at the meeting in Grand Falls where the Premier and the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) were - my colleague from Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) and my colleague from Lewisporte (Mr. F. White) were both at that meeting as were some other members from the other side of the House, the member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey) I believe. The member for Exploits was there. I am told now there is yet a new version, another updated chapter of the saga. I am told now that the Premier, away from the other people, tells them a different story altogether. Now his latest version is not really even money you know. "We are going to be able to do something." That is the latest.

You see the Premier had the same trouble I suggest on the Grand Falls hospital deal as he did on the Dobbins deal. I should not say deal because there are so many.

MR. NEARY: The member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey) was at this meeting. Is that correct?

MR. SIMMONS: That is right. The member for Exploits can vouch for the fact that the Premier held out some hope to

MR. SIMMONS: the people of Grand Falls that the hospital would yet be started. That was said at the Grand Falls -

MR. NEARY: September 29th. they were going to start.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, they were going to start September 29th., mind you. How stunned do they think the people of Grand Falls are?

But the same problem that confronts the Premier on the Grand Falls hospital confronts him also on the Dobbin deal. And I should not say Dobbin deal because there are so many Dobbin deals, Mr. Speaker, that we should start identifying them as 1, 2, 3 (a) and 3 (b) and so on.

MR. NEARY: Alphabetical order.

MR. SIMMONS: But I am talking about the Dobbin deal which we talked about here in the House involving the rental space a few days ago. The Premier had the same problem you see, that he has an awful job keeping the boys in line, an awful job. Or worse still, he takes the boys for granted. He goes off and signs his name to a piece of paper and then comes back and tries to whip the boys in line. But the boys are bigger now, Mr. Speaker. The boys are all clamouring.

MR. NEARY: How he does it is he says. "There is no building out there." No building out there and they all fall for that.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. Yes. He pleads with them, pleads with them. Check the premises but do not check the Swiss bank accounts.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier's problems on the Dobbin deal need to be analyzed a bit because they - I wanted to get, Mr. Speaker, if you will pardon me for interrupting, I must inform the House what I am doing - I wanted to get for posterity the copies of letters tabled, floored, sub-floored a moment ago, written by the

May 23, 1978

Tape No. 3439

MM - 3

MR. SIMMONS:

hon. the Minister of Mines

and Energy.

MR. NEARY:

- You cannot table things in

the john.

MR. SIMMONS:

But we are going to get back to that,

Mr. Speaker. Eventually, you know some time tonight, Thursday, Friday, Monday, Tuesday, next Thursday or Friday, some time the minister is going to have to come back into the House. The Minister of Justice advised him to leave but at some point he should be given the opportunity to hear this read to his face.

MR. NEARY:

Well, let us see if we can

get him back. Let us have a quorum call here. See if we can

get him back in.

MR. SPEAKER:

A quorum call.

May 23, 1978

Tape 3440

EC - 1

MR. SPEAKER:

We have a quorum.

The hon. the member for

Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think one thing

we have established so far in this debate is that people in Green Bay had better be very careful who they send their petitions to. We have established also that I cannot go to Springdale and that too, I cannot have my picture in the paper without asking the minister. Now, Mr. Speaker, we hear injected into the debate the total Eastcan development and, you know, people ask me, 'A person so vindictive at letter-writing, how does he manage in the energy policy field?' And the difference, Mr. Speaker, is this; in energy policy, unlike in letter-writing, the people in the Department of Mines and Energy in that area of expertise are so competent they are not going to stand by and let the minister shag it up. They are not going to stand by and let him fool it up, that is the difference. We have down in Mines and Energy Mr. Cabot Martin, a good man, Steve Millan, these people, and that is the difference, Mr. Speaker, that the minister's energy advisers are a lot more competent than his letter writers. And we can thank God for that, Mr. Speaker, that these people, in place before the minister came, are fighting terrible odds to keep this thing on track, but so far they are doing it. I only wish, Mr. Speaker, without jeopardizing the energy policy he would do the people of the Province the courtesy of stealing away one of the energy people even part-time so they could write letters for him, even if they took it home nights. After they are tired after the full day's work they would write much better letters than he writes

MR. SIMMONS obviously, in broad daylight. This, Mr. Speaker, is despicable, absolutely shameful! And I will go with the idea of my colleague a minute ago, I believe the letter addressed to the citizens who addressed that petition ought to be investigated in a couple of respects, and one of them is whether those letters - the writing of them and the postage - is a legitimate charge on the Treasury, or if the minister should not have to pay it out of his own pocket. That is absolutely shameful!

MR. NEARY: It is not Householder mail.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, it was getting around the Householder thing you see.

MR. NEARY: Yes, but

MR. NEARY: you have to send it to the householder.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes but that is what I say, he was getting around the householder because if he sent it by householder he would run up his total of three or four for the year, but by typing on the envelope he was able to circumvent the householder sort of thing and it was not counted.

MR. NEARY: They can do what they like.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) super sleuths.

MR. NEARY: That is what we want to have around this Province.

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

MR. SIMMONS: What is he saying?

MR. NEARY: He said we had better watch it

or we will have one of our own in trouble.

MR. SIMMONS: One what?

MR. NEARY: Well, you know, he does not want to talk about it.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, the old -

MR. NEARY: No. They do not want to talk about it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: The old death camp commandant over there.

The old fellow who starved them to death, the death camp commandant.

MR. NEARY: Auschwitz has nothing on Newfoundland today.

MR. SIMMONS: The death camp commandant, Mr. Speaker, his is the clear case, The Minister of Social Services, his is the clear case where actions speak louder than words. What he does to the welfare recipients of this Province is louder than any of his press releases. The action speaks for itself. And a woman in Deer Lake, I saw on television, she epitomizes so many around this Province, in my district and elsewhere, who are having it socked to them by the old death camp commandant. It is sickening. Then he

MR. SIMMONS: has the gall then to get in here and try and intimidate my colleague. If he has some dirt to fling then he should fling it. That is the difference in him and us. When we fling it we fling signed agreements. He might not think the Premier's signature means anything. Well he is like a lot of other people, he has learned as we have through bitter experience that the Premier's written word is about as good as his spoken word.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, imagine the dilemma of the teller down in the bank downstairs getting a cheque signed by F. D. Moores -

MR. NEARY: F. Duff Moores.

MR. SIMMONS: I am thinking of the Dobbin deal now with this signature. Imagine her getting this cheque, F. D. Moores, imagine what she has to think before she cashes the cheque. She looks at it, it is made out for so much money, the date is proper, the amount is in the right place, the payee is in the right place, all spelled correctly and legibly and the signature is down in the right hand corner in the right place, there is a bank account number on it, but she has got a dilemma, Mr. Speaker. The amount is okay, everything else is okay, but the signature, she has to ask herself now, after this Dobbin deal of a week or so ago, she has to ask herself, Oh yes, I know it is F.D. Moores. It certainly is his signature, it does not look like a forgery, it conforms to his signature card, it is obviously F.D. Moores' signature, no question about that but she has to ask herself a question: What is it? Is it his final irrevocable signature or is it his tentative signature in principle? Do I cash the cheque or do I half cash the cheque?" Imagine her dilemma after the Dobbin deal? Which signature is it? Is it the signature that means something or the signature that does not mean anything? Or is there a little code behind the signature saying F. D. Moores sub-one, F.D. Moores, two? Which signature is the irrevocable signature?

MR. SIMMONS:

What a dilemma for the poor girl.

MR. NEARY:

If it were made out for a colour television set you would have to look at it twice.

MR. SIMMONS:

But how much bigger the dilemma, Mr. Speaker, and she would have to check the date on that one. She would have to see whether the date was newly entered. She would have to see whether the ink was dry on the date for that one.

Imagine the dilemma, but for Mr. Dobbin it was no dilemma, Mr. Speaker. He knew how irrevocable the signature was. But let the word go out now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's written word is worth no more than his spoken word.

Mr. Speaker, getting back to this budget document itself again. They say that many documents are significant for what they do not contain. This one is different. This one is significant for at least one thing which it contains. It is called, Into The Eighties, a blueprint for development.

And,

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, in this Budget supplement called blueprint for development we have projected 40,000 jobs, 40,000 jobs. Not true of course. They cannot do it. They will not do it. But since when, Mr. Speaker, did truth have anything to do with this Budget?

MR. NEARY: The minister's swan song.

MR. SIMMONS: Forty thousand jobs.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, it is worth pointing out for the record what kind of deception that figure is. For example, of the 40,000, 21,000 jobs will come into existence quite automatically given normal development. Given the absence of any great catastrophe, 21,000 will come into existence any way. And the Budget document, the supplement admits that 21,000 of the 40,000 will come into existence over the five year period quite automatically.

Mr. Speaker, another 6,900 of the jobs are contingent on Gull Island, and we all know, of course, that that may go ahead and it may not go ahead in the next five years. So another 6,900 in the projection are contingent on Gull Island. Another 1,000, Mr. Speaker, are contingent on the reactivation of Lab Linerboard.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Do you realize that? 1,000 of the jobs projected here depend on Lab Linerboard, 6,900 depend on the Gull Island development, and 21,000 by the supplement's own admission will come into existence anyway even if government does not lift a finger. That is - 21,000 plus 6,900 is 27,900 and 1,000 is 28,900. So otherwise, Mr. Speaker, the government is talking about 11,100 jobs over the next five years, 2,000 jobs a year, 2,000 jobs a year.

MR. RIDEOUT: Sure RDA is supposed to create more than that.

MR. SIMMONS: If you listen to the Minister of Rural Development, RDA creates those many just about every day, if you go by the press releases that are sent out.

MR. RIDEOUT: Or you go by the Action Group editorials.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, this supplement, of course, like the Budget has one distinguishing characteristic and one only, like

Mr. Simmons: the Budget it was written in Montreal. The supplement, Mr. Speaker, the Budget supplement projects an increase in per capita income of 26 per cent over the next five years. What is so shattering about that? 26 per cent, 5 per cent a year for the next five years. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that in the last five years the per capita income has risen by 40 per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. SIMMONS: In the last five year the per capita income has risen by 40 per cent, yes.

So that what they are projecting, Mr. Speaker, over the next five years is not even enough to keep up with inflation. They are admitting in the Budget document, the Budget blueprint that there is going to be a net loss in effective income, in effective earnings, real earnings, a net loss over the next five years if you are to believe the projections in the Budget document, the Budget supplement.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget supplement does us a real favour though in that it draws attention to the overriding weakness. The overriding weakness is in this entire administration, and it is this, this administration never had any blueprint for development, it does not have it now, and it never will. That is why they are in such trouble on the hospital extensions which they project in one Budget as going ahead, and then they have to change their minds on. That is why they are in such trouble on fisheries development because they have no policy, they have no blueprints. They have no shortage of press announcements, but they have no blueprint.

MR. SIMMONS: That is why they are in trouble on rural development, on the creation of small industries. Because it is government by whim. Today we set up a special Action Group, tomorrow

MR. SIMMONS: we do something else.
No blueprint, Mr. Speaker. They never had it, do not have it now and never will have it, this government will not.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I did not say that there is any shortage of Band-Aid approaches with this government - all kinds of Band-Aid approaches, approaches to get them elected, like a promise of an arena on the Southern Shore. How many times has that one worked? More times than the member for Ferryland (Mr. Power) would care to admit.

MR. POWER: (Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: Well, at that time the government was not trying to get that member elected. They were working very hard to get him defeated. He should remember that before he gets too cozy with this administration. He is not there because they wanted him, he is there because they could not get rid of him.

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: And the member has a good memory and he would be well advised to draw on the memory fairly often. They worked tooth and nail - including the gentleman who sits in front of him right now, by the way. The Minister of Fisheries worked very hard to get Mr. Doyle elected, very, very hard, and I can tell about some of the shenanigans that were involved in that one.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not get sore (Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: Ah, that is a fairly basic difference. But the Minister of Fisheries worked pretty hard on that one and did not quite succeed, of course, and I compliment the member for Ferryland for getting here. He worked almost as hard as the member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) in getting here - almost as hard.

MR. SIMMONS:

If there are medals given out these two fellows should get one just for sheer perseverance when it comes to trying to get into the House of Assembly. No shortage, Mr. Speaker, of Band-Aid approaches. A clear example of the Band-Aid approach, of course, is the assistance for sawmills. Remember what an exciting thing that was supposed to be? Or remember the recreation programme just before the 1975 election? What a tremendous boon that was supposed to be until it got called off the week after the election. Band-Aid approaches. No shortage, Mr. Speaker, of window dressing in this administration. Lots of shortage of planning, but no shortage of window dressing. Beautiful window dressing jobs, Mr. Speaker. And again, I have to refer to the announcements about fisheries development. Every day of the week, Mr. Speaker, another announcement on something to do with the fisheries. One would not object to that, Mr. Speaker, one would be encouraged by it if there were any substance or any follow-up. Take the forestry programme. Remember how that was going to change the face of democracy? Remember three years ago how that was going to turn her inside out and create revenue like you would not believe and put Bowaters in line and Price in line? You remember all the tough talk? Remember those heady days? Do you want to know who is still calling the shot on forestry? I will give you a hint - two paper companies. So who do they put on the advisory board to decide whether Linerboard should close or open? The two paper companies, of course. Imagine the insult to the people of Newfoundland. Imagine the insult to the people of Stephenville - Bay St. George area. The advisory board which would advise government on whether the plant in Stephenville would close down or remain open had as two of its strongest members senior representatives of Price and

MR. SIMMONS: Bowaters. And as if that were not a big enough insult, the rest of the group by and large were stacked with people who had interests with the Power Corporation, Bathurst. Everybody, Mr. Speaker, except the ordinary people of Stephenville, had an input on that advisory board.

MR. HODDER: If you were looking for a crowd -

MR. SIMMONS: That is right. My colleague from Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) puts it very well when he says, 'If you were looking for somebody'- in other words, if you wanted to close the mill and wanted somebody to blame it on that is the group you would appoint - all guys in the paper mill business themselves who want another mill like I need an extra leg. What an insult! So who calls the tune? The same people who have always called the tune on forestry, the two paper mills. And what is this government doing about it? A lot of blabbering, a lot of chattering, a lot of talking, a lot of gibberish but where is the action? I will tell you where the action is. There are now 300 more civil servants in Forestry than we had three years ago. There is the action.

MR. HODDER: More civil servants than woodsmen.

MR. SIMMONS: More civil servants than woodsmen. But what is changed in terms of forestry policy, Mr. Speaker? Oh, I know we have

Mr. Simmons: volumes of regulations. I know all of that. But what effectively has changed in terms of what is really hurting us in this Province, and that is our inability to get at those mature timber stands in Bay d'Espoir, in my district, and all over this Province, mature timber stands that are in a very dicey situation today. We can blame some of it on the spruce budworm, but we must blame a large part of it on the fact that Bowater and Price have been sitting on those stands too long. I flew over some of the stands last year out around the Stephenville area, and I was appalled at two things, the devastating effect of the spruce budworm, number one; but two - and this was pointed out to me by the forestry experts aboard the aircraft - two, the large proportion of the stands which they classified as overmature. Let alone the problem the spruce budworm was creating, most of the stands out there West of Pinchgut Lake, the area we flew over were overmatured.

MR. F. ROWE: Rotting on the stump.

MR. SIMMONS: It should have been cut ten years ago, five years, rotting on the stump. Who made the decision not to cut them? We can blame it on the Liberals, I suppose, they were in power ten years ago. Or we can blame it on the Tories they were in power five years ago. Who made the decision? Bowaters. Who was going to straighten out Bowaters? This hon. crowd.

Go back, Mr. Speaker, read the rhetoric of three or four years ago in this House. What a job they were going to do on Bowaters and on Price.

AN HON. MEMBER: Reforestation.

MR. SIMMONS: I expect the minister finds the brochure a total failure.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. SIMMONS: No, your picture is not in it by the way.

MR. BRETT: It is unfortunate.

MR. SIMMONS: I would classify it as a total failure, I would classify it. I would make it an undocument, if I were you and have it reprinted.

MR. SIMMONS: Or better still just get The Village Voice and reprint it and send it out to all of the school youngsters.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) tonight.

MR. SIMMONS: Tonight, are you? Why does not the Minister of Education send out The Village Voice, out to all of the youngsters in Newfoundland?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, exactly.

Mr. Speaker, there is no shortage of window dressing with this administration be it announcements on the fishery, announcements about forestry development, announcements about anything, about special actions groups, no shortage of window dressing. But it is all of that, Mr. Speaker, it is all cosmetic. It is only skin deep, all cosmetic. The minister's announcements, the Fisheries Minister's announcements, the announcements on forestry, all cosmetic, all designed to create the immediate good appearance, cosmetic. Mr. Speaker, I say that the last thing we need in Newfoundland right now are make-up artists. The last thing we need are cosmetic specialists, plastic surgeons that approve of the appearance only.

What the people of Newfoundland need those thousands without jobs, those thousands who are over-taxed, those youngsters who are having it socked to them by the Minister of Education, those youngsters under the dental care programme who are having it socked to them by the Minister of Health -

MR. NEARY: Aided and abetted by the member -

MR. SIMMONS: - those people who are insulted daily by letters from the Minister of Mines and Energy, at their own expense, these people, Mr. Speaker, we people -

MR. NEARY: You would not mind if the minister paid for the stamps.

MR. SIMMONS: - what we need, Mr. Speaker, is not the insulting letters, not the kick in the guts from the Minister of Education, not the cosmetic announcements from the Minister of Fisheries, what we need, Mr. Speaker, are some skilled, dedicated people, not plastic surgeons, but real physicians who can put the body politic on the road to recovery.

There is, Mr. Speaker, as I say, no shortage of Band-Aid approaches. No shortage of cosmetic approaches.

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Tape 3445

EC - 1

MR. SIMMONS: No shortage, Mr. Speaker, of stalling tactics. This government will live to regret what it did on the Churchill Falls issue by putting it in court. I know why they put it in court - they put it in court to delay it.

MR. NEARY: You could start up a Band-Aid industry in this House - political Band-Aids.

MR. SIMMONS: They could even have names on the political Band-Aids - Morgan; Carter, W.; Carter, J. And in the big ones -

W. CARTER: (Inaudible) mouth packer.

MR. SIMMONS: Pardon?

MR. W. CARTER: A big one for your mouth.

MR. SIMMONS: I would not want Carter written across my mouth.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I was going to refer to a note that I made the other day. The Hydro people themselves are saying now that it will be some time, I am quoting one of the vice-presidents of Hydro who spoke at a conference in Halifax last week. It will be some time. 'I foresee several years,' he said, 'before the Churchill Falls court issue is resolved.' Now it is 1978 - several years - I do not know, you can interpret that however you want but it does not sound like it is very immediate in my books. And, Mr. Speaker, that was the entire exercise. Stall it, put it on ice, put it in court, while at the same time giving the impression that somehow you are taking somebody to court. What do you have? What do you have in this court case? It is not a confrontation, adversary situation at all. It is strictly an interpretation. You are asking the court

MR. SIMMONS: if your interpretation is right and in so doing, Mr. Speaker, are weakening our position, because by having to ask the question they are admitting they are not sure of the answer. On this one, Mr. Speaker, nothing can be surer than our ground on this particular one, but the government has given a lot of our ground away by taking the issue to court.

MR. NEARY: They got it into court, by the way, on a clause that was put in by the former administration.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, that crowd that did not do anything right. No shortage, Mr. Speaker, of stalling tactics with this administration. If you want a good example, the best one I can give you, though not the only one, is the Churchill Falls issue; giving the impression on one front that you are doing something decisive, but in reality put it on the back burner where you will not have to do anything about it for several years. And it makes good legalese, it makes good language, Mr. Speaker, to be able to say, Well, actually, it is before the courts, you know, and we really should not say much about that now because it is before the courts. And that line is good for several years, Mr. Speaker, until it dawns on some people that you are just pulling the wool over their eyes. Nor, Mr. Speaker, is there any shortage of political con jobs. How is \$110 million for a con job? How is \$110 million for a firecracker job? How is \$110 million for a couple of holes? And to add insult to injury they did not pull themselves into the holes after. A hundred and ten smackeroots because they wanted a nice, bright introduction to their election campaign. How is that for a con job?

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MR. SIMMONS:

And if you want one that is more immediate how about the Rural Development Authority, the authority that was going to be the salvation of all the sawmill industries in the Province until they got waylaid on funeral parlours and beauty shops? And after doing all that, after financing beauty shops and funeral parlours, by the way, and drive-in theatres, they are now telling people that they only deal in resource industries. Well, I would say the only member who believes

MR. SIMMONS: in funeral parlours as a resource industries is the member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young). I had a friend of mine, not a friend but an acquaintance who come to see me from another district, one of the good Tory districts in St. John's.

MR. HODDER: No member for that St. John's district?

MR. SIMMONS: His member would not see him. That is what he told me that his member would not see him.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Minister of Mines and Energy gave permission.

MR. SIMMONS: No, I did not get the permission of the Minister of Mines and Energy. And I did not get the permission of the St. John's member whose district he lives in. But he came to me nevertheless, he will probably be in trouble over it, but he had an industry, a very good industry, he actually wanted to get involved in the housing business, you know. But that is not a resource industry, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: He should have checked with Craig.

MR. SIMMONS: All that wood you see, Mr. Speaker, is not a resource industry for some reason. Beauty parlours are mind you, not housing.

So if you want to talk about con jobs, Mr. Speaker, how about the Rural Development Authority? If you want to talk about the glossiest, slickest, most highly promoted con job of all what better than the Special Action Group.

MR. RIDEOUT: 3800.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. SIMMONS: Oh no, that is in a category all its own.

The Special Action Group; that night as I watched it on television back in January, the Premier there launching forth this half hour telephone number, there must have been only one person smiling other than him, and that was MacConnell.

DR. KITCHEN: No three, Bob Cole.

MR. SIMMONS: No, Bob was so busy laughing his way to the bank that a smile would be too conservative a way to describe what he was doing at the time.

MR. NEARY: A ten year contract in his back pocket.

MR. SIMMONS: No. Come on now. Ten years?

MR. NEARY: Ten years.

MR. SIMMONS: Ten years?

MR. NEARY: A ten year contract.

MR. SIMMONS: The Premier will not table it. He promised to do it three weeks ago and he will not do it.

MR. NEARY: Part-time Action Group director - a ten year contract, not bad!

MR. SIMMONS: The Premier promised a month ago to table the document.

MR. NEARY: How can the hon. gentleman condone that?

MR. SIMMONS: That is okay. I am just pausing here. I have a little soul searching going on here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier, of course, not only spent a half hour telling the Province about this Special Action Group but he also went before various groups and told about the great Special Action Group. He was not very particular about the facts mind you, as you will see. He went before the St. John's Rotary Club in early 1978, just after his famous television appearance, and this was brought to my attention, Mr. Speaker, by somebody who saw a copy of his speech, an elderly gentleman here in the city whom I do not know, I have never met. He called me and he drew my attention to it.

DR. KITCHEN: He calls me regularly.

MR. SIMMONS: Probably so.

DR. KITCHEN: A big PC though.

MR. SIMMONS: A good PC is he?

DR. KITCHEN: A big PC., I would not say a good one.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, I have his name but I will not use it here. But an elderly gentleman, a man in his seventies who called me and, as I say, I never met him but he drew my attention to a speech that the Premier had made on the subject of the Special Action Group.

Now I want to quote from the speech. The Premier is speaking to Rotary and he talks about -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. NEARY: Is that the Minister of Mines they are coming for now?

MR. SIMMONS: No, they will need more than that, Mr. Speaker. They will need four for him, one for him and three for his letters when they come to get the Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. RIDEOUT: To take away the evidence.

MR. NEARY: A Brinks' armoured car.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the Premier, early '78 is speaking to Rotary here in St. John's and he says in part, "So we set up the Special Action Group, a group of volunteers dedicated to the public service."

DR. KITCHEN: \$47,000 a year volunteer.

MR. SIMMONS: And the gentleman, in his seventies, Mr. Speaker, a retired man, but still obviously fairly observant, said, "Mr. Simmons, tell the Premier when you see him, I would volunteer for \$47,000 a year too." I guess he would. Oh boy! Volunteers? And the Premier actually unloaded that nonsense, Mr. Speaker, on a group of intelligent men, or supposedly intelligent men in the Rotary Club. He told them that they were volunteers. And after I got the call from this gentleman, a day or so after the speech, I ran into two or three people who were actually at the dinner and they asked me

Mr. Simmons: what this special Action Group was, and how many were involved in it?

MR. NEARY: Misleading the House.

MR. SIMMONS: Because they had the impression that there must have been a fairly large number, you know, twenty, thirty, forty. They said, "How did they get those volunteers? We did not see any ads in the paper asking people to volunteer their services." But, you know, one guy was even sucked in by this thing, you know. "That is quite a move, you know. 'Frank' has actually got a group of people together on a volunteer basis. You cannot argue with that." Then I tell him about the conditions, the terms of the volunteer job like \$40,000 worth of volunteering, for example. How is that for a volunteer job?

You know, actually with my public spiritedness. Mr. Speaker, I would take on three or four of these on a voluntary basis. I would take on five, six of those \$47,000 volunteer jobs. That is a fantastic bit of humanity.

DR. KITCHEN: In your own spare time.

MR. NEARY: Plus the pension plan, plus the fringe benefits.

MR. SIMMONS: Imagine! And he goes before a group of intelligent businessmen and tells them that they are volunteering. Volunteer?

You see, Mr. Speaker, I reiterate what I said earlier, the Premier's word, whether written or spoken, can be less and less relied on, less and less relied on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: That is one of the most callous examples, Mr. Speaker, I know of misleading people, to tell a group of thirty or forty or fifty businessmen of this Province that the special Action Group are a group of volunteers. Now we all know the difference, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that the record will be corrected by the Premier at his first opportunity. Perhaps he did not know it before, but he said it to that

MR. SIMMONS: group. It is in the transcript of what he said, 'volunteers on the Special Action Group.' Shameful misleading of the people at a time when they have had all they can take from this administration in terms of half truths, half lies.

MR. RIDEOUT: 'Lundrigan' does not know what is going on.

MR. NEARY: Do not run away now, Mr. Exploits.

MR. SIMMONS: Is the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) here?

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, he did not know we were sitting until eight o'clock and he is coming now.

MR. NEARY: He is coming now. The member for Grand Falls is coming in for the eight o'clock session.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, we have been talking about this budget.

MR. RIDEOUT: No wonder the House Leader over there is in trouble.

MR. SIMMONS: There is lots more yet, Mr. Speaker, can be said about it. My other colleagues will have a few words to say.

Mr. Speaker, there is one other thing that needs to be said tonight I suppose. There is one thing the budget does not tell us, it does not tell us where the Premier's trip will be next year. We know where it was last year, to Europe with a group of Cabinet Ministers. They were going to find jobs. Remember that little - Oh great things were going to happen. We were going to have a great statement about the jobs that were going to be created. The Minister of Fisheries was there. The Minister of Rural Development, as he then was, the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan).

MR. NEARY: The blueberry man.

MR. FLIGHT: 2,500 jobs in Forestry alone.

MR. NEARY: That is right. There were 2,500 jobs in Forestry alone.

MR. SIMMONS: Now I can understand the Minister of Health looking a little askance because they would not take him on the trip.

MR. RIDEOUT: He fell out of bed and hurt his head.

MR. SIMMONS: He has so much trouble staying in bed he would have an awful lot of trouble looking after himself in Norway.

MR. COLLINS: I should have stayed in bed today.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister is in bed today.

MR. NEARY: The member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells) made it recently to Norway.

MR. H. COLLINS: The hon. member would not you to sleep.

MR. SIMMONS: Is that right? I see. It is that bad.

MR. RIDEOUT: It is nothing unusual, they are always asleep over there.

MR. SIMMONS: You know, he has paid me one of the best compliments I got in this House.

AN HON. MEMBER: What did he say?

MR. SIMMONS: You see last year, Mr. Speaker, the Premier and his entourage went to Europe, let me not mislead the House. Let me say it as it is. The Premier's entourage went to Norway, the Premier went to London -

MR. NEARY: Claridges.

MR. SIMMONS: - went to Claridges in London. The only man who saw Norway from Claridges. It is called the long distance view.

Last year they went to Europe, Mr. Speaker, and they were going to have 2,500 jobs in -

MR. H. CARTER: The year before last.

MR. SIMMONS: I am talking a year ago in February now. It is February of '77.

AN HON. MEMBER: '76, just after the election.

MR. SIMMONS: No. No. February '76. Oh they are missing out, Mr. Speaker. They are a trip shy now.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not forget the sealing.

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MR. SIMMONS: Yes. And this year it was the sealing trip.

MR. NEARY: The only one who made it this year was
Kilbride.

MR. SIMMONS: And this year also, Mr. Speaker, in addition
to the sealing trip the member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells), and
the Premier goes off to Norway looking for some more aluminum
plants. Aluminum plants,

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, did you hear what I said? - aluminium plants. Every day, Mr. Speaker, they are more like the Smallwood they condemned. Now it is a search for aluminum plants. Remember all the condemnations about the search for big industry? Every day they sound more like their mentor. What a merry band of wandering minstrels, Mr. Speaker! So the question is, Mr. Speaker, since it is not in the Budget, it is hidden there somewhere - I suppose it is - but the question is not only - who will go? Will it be the member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells)? - the question not only, Mr. Speaker, is, Who will go, the question is, Where will they go next year? Well, they have been to Norway, they have certainly worn Antigua out, they have taken their circuits all around the States and Canada and Europe. Where are they going to go?

AN HON. MEMBER: Cuba.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, there is a fish plant in Cuba. There you go! Cuba is certainly a possibility. What about South America, Mr. Speaker? Could somebody pass the message on to the Premier? What about South America? They would have a certain affinity with the people down there - political temporaries. What about South America on one of those job creation jaunts, Mr. Speaker, one of those kicks to create some jobs? It certainly meets all the requirements for such an escapade at the taxpayers' expense. It conjures up all the phraseology of an N.I.S., McConnell, McLean production, you know, rural development. Imagine the press release they could write on South America in the context of rural development and small industries and that kind of thing. McConnell, McLean, N.I.S. would have a field day, Mr. Speaker, writing a press release on the Premier's impending visit to South America. It is certainly

MR. SIMMONS: far enough away, Mr. Speaker, and exotic sounding enough to impress the natives back home with the on-the-spot radio reports from the reporters you take along with you. It is far enough away that the Premier's version of whatever takes place will never be contradicted. Who he meets, what he talks about, that will never get contradicted because there will be nobody there to either understand what the other side said because of the language barrier, or more important, understand what the Premier said. And most important of all, Mr. Speaker, I submit to the Premier that South America provides the plush hotel accommodations they need, all the trappings, Mr. Speaker, provides all the trappings of an expense-paid holiday and some anonymity. I think, Mr. Speaker, I have made an open and shut case for South America. And I predict, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier will go to South America. I do not know who he is going to take. I advise everybody over there to stay close to him they might get a trip out of it. The possibility is certainly there.

But now to things more mundane. I would move the adjournment of the debate if this is in order. It is my understanding, Sir, we are about to close her up.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has moved the adjournment of the debate.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the remaining Orders of the Day do stand deferred and that this House on its rising do adjourn until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 3:00 P.M., and that this House do now adjourn.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, May 24, 1978 at 3:00 P.M.